

**The Ramakrishna Mission  
Institute of Culture Library**

**Presented by**

**Dr. Baridbaran Mukerji**

**RMICL-8**

**3613**









AN

ANTIDOTE TO BRAHMAISM,

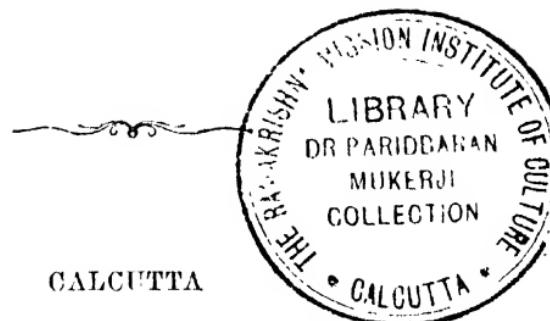
IN

FOUR LECTURES,

BY

THE REV. LAL BENARI DAY,

PASTOR OF THE FREE MISSION CHURCH, CORNWALLIS SQUARE,  
CALCUTTA.



CALCUTTA

MESSRS. G. C. HAY AND CO.

1867.

INTERIOR OF THE BAPTIST MISSION, 1861	
RMIC LIBRARY	
Acc. No.	3613
Class No.	
Date	
St. Card	
Class.	Am.
Cat.	82
Bk. Card	✓
Checked	✓ <i>Am</i>

To

THE REV. ALEXANDER DUFF, D. D., LL. D.,

*Congressor of the Committee on Foreign Missions of the Free  
Church of Scotland, at Edinburgh.*

MY DEAR DR. DUFF,

To whom can I more fittingly inscribe this little volume than to you, who were the first to put before my educated countrymen the claims of our most holy Faith ?

Accept these pages as a small token of my sense of the obligations under which I am to you, and of my admiration for your character as the Prince of Indian Missionaries.

Believe me, my dear Dr. Duff,

Your's affectionately,

LAL BEHARI DAY.

CALCUTTA,                    }  
*February 20th, 1867.*        }



intelligible  
go ..

## LECTURE I.\*

---

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

I appear before you this evening, to trace the rise and progress of the Calcutta Bráhma Samáj, and to examine the leading principles of the religion which it professes. I hope and trust you will give me a patient and candid hearing, for you yourselves—at least some of you—are interested in the result of the examination. Last Friday, when I was in this hall hearing the Lecture of Mr. Bruce, a native gentleman, alluding to the present Lecture, asked me, whether I was going to “pitch into” the Bráhmas; and possibly some of you have come here to-night expecting to hear a laboured invective against Bráhmas and the Bráhma faith. I trust that as regards that matter, you will be disappointed. Gentlemen, my object is truth, and it is my desire on the present occasion to set the truth before you. And may God, who is the source of all TRUTH—yea, who is TRUTH itself, inspire us all with the love of it.

\* Delivered at the General Assembly's Institution on the 10th of April, 1863.

Now that the Vedas, those venerable ancient Hindu literature, have, by European enterprise, been rescued from the wreck of time, it scarcely admits of a doubt, that the primitive faith, of which we have any authentic record, of the people of India, was the simplest form of idolatry, *viz.*, the worship of the elements. In process of time, however, as the spirit of philosophic enquiry manifested itself, those elements, which were the objects of adoration, began to be regarded as the symbols of the Divine power ; and the religion of the *Sanhítas* was, in consequence, sublimated, in the *Upanishads*, into a species of monotheism. But monotheism, properly so called, is not to be found in the religious books of the Hindus. Hinduism is essentially pantheistic. Believing in the philosophical dogmas, that out of nothing nothing comes, and that spirit cannot act upon matter, the ancient sages of India reasoned themselves into a sort of spiritual pantheism, which confounded the Creator with the creature, and taught the homogeneousness of the external world with the Divine essence,—which Divine essence was asserted to be absolutely the only substance in the universe, without a second. But this transcendental pantheism, however congenial to the thoughtful minds of the philosophers, was un-

intelligible to the unlettered multitude. In no age, or country, are the common people capable of philosophic speculation. They are immersed in the commerce of the senses. The ideal and the abstract obtain no foot-hold in their minds. The sensuous and the concrete are their element. It is not given to them to obtain an intelligible idea of the Deity presented to them in the speculative parts of the Vedas—a Deity whose highest perfection consists in the destitution of all imaginable qualities. The mass of the people require something to address their senses. They want something to interest their feelings, to draw out their affections. The cold abstraction of a Deity, as good as non-existent, seems to them to be a mere figment of the imagination; while the alleged consubstantiality of their own nature with the Eternal Mind is belied by their own consciousness. Hence was fabricated Pouránika idolatry with its pantheon of three hundred and thirty millions of gods; hence the imposing ritual and gorgeous ceremonial of the Hindu temple; hence the paraphernalia of the most gigantic superstition the world has ever witnessed.

It has been remarked by a deep thinker that, “popular religions answer only for a certain stage of culture.” And, certainly, with the

growth of the general intelligence of a people, their faith in religious traditions diminishes, and the opposition between the theosophy of men of culture and the mythic religion of the populace becomes less and less marked. The decline and fall of the graceful but impure superstitions of Greece and Rome testify to the truth of this assertion. In oriental countries, however, this tendency has not had, perhaps, so striking a manifestation. This arose chiefly from the nature and character of the oriental mind, which is more passive and conservative than the occidental. In our own land, the want of a community of religious interest, between the educated few and the ignorant many, has been preserved for ages by the contrivances of a most ingenious priesthood. The multitude were debarred from all culture. Not only were the higher doctrines of morality and religion carefully concealed from them, but grammar and most branches of secular learning were proscribed. Thus the millions of India have, from time out of mind, been made the victims of a most debasing ignorance. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising, that an almost impossible gulf should separate the faith of the common people from that of the philosophers. But though the Hindu mind is slow of change, it is

not immutable. Though the tree of knowledge was guarded by the flaming sword of Bráhma-nical authority, it could not for ever remain inaccessible. Some rays of the light, such as it was, of the philosophers, glanced on the murky multitude; and a few choice spirits amongst the philosophers themselves, rising superior to their class prejudices, proclaimed to the vulgar mass the leading tenets of their esoteric faith.

Among the men who, in modern times, strove to establish in India a community of religious interest between the men of culture and the common people, a high place is due to CHAITANYA, the founder of the sect of the Vaishnavas of Bengal. It is true, that he did not abjure all faith in the mythic religion of the people, but his great merit, as a religious reformer, consisted in his attempt to harmonize the popular superstition of the land with the secret theosophy of the priests, and thus establish a basis of common brotherhood. But Chaitanya laboured under one great disadvantage. The common people of his age had not intelligence enough to perceive the falsehood of the time-honoured superstitions of their ancestors.

In our own day, the task of breaking down the middle wall of partition, which separates

the religion of the educated few from the religion of the ignorant many, was undertaken by a man, who, to an extensive acquaintance with Bráhmanical theology and philosophy, added no inconsiderable amount of modern culture. That man was the late RÁJÁH RÁM MOHAN Roy. That great man, owing to his familiar acquaintance with the Koran, the Hebrew and the Christian Scriptures, got hold of a great truth, the truth, *viz.*, that there is but one God, and that He alone ought to be worshipped. That truth took possession of his earnest mind. It exerted considerable influence on his great social heart. He repudiated the idolatrous ceremonies and customs of his country. He did more. He preached to his countrymen the truth which he had himself learnt. He declaimed with great power against the idolatrous practices of his countrymen. He held disputations ; he wrote pamphlets to prove the fundamental truth of theology, that there is but one God, and that He alone ought to be worshipped.

I trust I yield to none in this assembly in my admiration of the talents, the energy, the philanthropy, the earnestness and moral courage, of RÁM MOHAN Roy. But, while I cheerfully, and, as a Bengali, with honest pride, render to that

great than the humble tribute of my admiration, I cannot shut my eyes either to the false position he took up in his monotheistic controversy, or to the singular defects of his religious system in general. Rám Mohan Roy was right when he taught that there is but one God, he was wrong when he maintained that that was the invariable teaching of the Hindu Sástras. It is scarcely necessary, at this time of day, to prove, that the Hindu Sástras are pantheistic in their teachings, and that the Vedánta, on which the Hindu reformer laid great stress, is eminently so. In days gone by, the followers of Rám Mohan Roy contended, like their illustrious chief, that true monotheism was inculcated in the Vedánta. But one would suppose from their silence at present, and their avowed repudiation of any belief in the Divine authority of the Vedánta, or indeed of any book, that they had at last discovered their mistake. The truth is, not monotheism, but *monoism*, is the burden of the teaching of the Hindu books. The Vedánta teaches, not that there is one God, but that there is only one *substance* in existence, and that the universe is but that substance indefinitely modified. ॥**একমেরাত্মিকীয়॥**, the motto of Rám Mohan Roy and his followers, does not so much mean that there is only one God without a second,

as that there is only one entity without a second. I do not mean to say that there are not in the Hindu S'ástras hundreds of passages in which is apparently taught the doctrine of the Divine Unity, but what I do maintain is, that that unity is a pantheistic unity. Now, Rám Mohan Roy overlooked this fact ; and the consequence of this oversight was, that he quoted detached *s'lokas* from the Hindu S'ástras to maintain his point. But it was as easy for his adversaries, the old orthodox Pánditas, to produce other passages from the same writings contradictory of Rám Mohan Roy's position ; and it must be acknowledged that, in his contest with those Pánditas, so far as the pantheistic controversy was concerned, he had the worse side of the argument. Rám Mohan Roy occupied, as I have already said, a false position. He ought to have thrown overboard the whole of the Hindu scriptures, which his followers of the present day have actually done.

With a view to worship the God whose unity he proclaimed, to read and expound the S'ástras supposed to be monotheistical, and to form the nucleus of a religious association, Rám Mohan Roy established the BRAHMA SAMÁJ in the year 1828. It was a purely devotional association. The Vedas were chanted, sacred hymns were

sung, and religious conversations were held. On the departure of the founder to Europe, and his subsequent decease, the Samáj declined, but fresh *impetus* was added to it by the establishment, in the year 1839, of the *Tattwabodhini Sabhá*, under the auspices of the late Bábú Dwáruká Náth Tagore. A periodical was started to advocate the cause of the rising sect, and pamphlets published in vindication of its doctrines. Ever since, it has, on the whole, been making steady progress ; and it has now attained considerable prosperity under the leadership of Bábú Debendra Náth Tagore.

Such, gentlemen, is the rise, such the external progress of the Calcutta Brahma Samáj, now called the Bráhma Samáj.\* Let me now for a few seconds direct your attention to what I may call the internal history of the Samáj, the history, that is to say, of its religious opinions. And certainly, the phases of the Bráhma faith are a singular illustration of the fickleness of the human mind in religious matters, when left to its own unaided cogitations. Our reformers at first were not bold enough openly to run counter to the notions of the people. They endeavoured

\* The Association was first called the Brahma Samáj, or a meeting for the worship of (Brahma) God ; it is now called the Bráhma Samáj, that is, an assembly of Brúhmas, or worshippers of Brahma.

to conciliate popular prejudice. If eye-witnesses report aright, at the first establishment of the Samáj, the Vedas were chaunted behind a screen, accompanied with the sound of the *s'ankha*, the sacred conch-shell; and the holy volume was reverentially opened in the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Samáj, but it was not submitted to the profane gaze of the throng assembled in the outer court. But the whirligig of time, which brings on strange changes, added nerve to the reformers. The screen was removed, and the shell laid aside. The Vedas were openly read, and, what was more, publicly expounded.

The belief, however, in the Divine authority and inspiration of the Vedas remained, for a long time, the fixed dogma of the Bráhma Samáj. The *Tattwabodhini Patriká* for the month of As'win of S'akábdá 1767, that is the year 1845, contained the following passage:—“They,” that is the Vedas, “are the sole foundation of all our belief, and the truths of all other Sástras must be judged of according to their agreement with them.” Bábú Debendra Náth Tagore, the President of the Bráhma Samáj, wrote thus in the *Englishman* newspaper of the 24th of October, 1846, under his own signature:—“We consider the Vedas and the Vedas alone as the standard of our faith and principles.”

A change, however, took place, not long after, in the opinion of the Bráhma Samáj on this vital point. The educated portion of them began to suspect that, after all, they were mistaken as to the foundations of their faith. They got new light from the works of some of the latest American and English deists. They questioned the inspiration of the Vedas. Following in the wake of the latest of English infidel writers, they doubted the possibility of a “paper revelation.” It is difficult to ascertain the time when the Bráhmaśas as a body repudiated the Divine authority of the Vedas. In the *Bráhma Dharmma*,—an authoritative exposition of the principles of Bráhmaism—which was, I believe, first published towards the end of the year 1850, the point under consideration was by no means settled. Soon after that time, however, the Bráhmaśas publicly declared, that they acknowledged no other revelation than the volume of nature, which, to quote their words, “is open to all, and which contains a revelation, clearly teaching, in strong and legible characters, the great truths of religion and morality.” And now, of course, no secret is made of the matter. The very idea of “paper-revelations” and “book-made religions” is scouted ; and Bráhmaism is said to be based on **সহজ জ্ঞান** or common sense ; or in the

language of a Bráhma tract-writer, it is “founded on the rock of intuition.”

Let me give you another illustration of the Protean shapes which Bráhmaism assumes. On consulting the earlier expositions of Bráhmaism, I find that the doctrine of the transmigration of souls was a part of its creed. The *Tattwabodhini Patriká* of As'win, S'akábdá, 1767, that is of the year 1845, says—“Our religion inculcates that we shall have to pass a *state of probation during successive lives of shorter or longer duration*, until we are fitted by sacred knowledge and entire devotion to the will of God, to enjoy that supreme felicity which may be said to be a participation of [the] Divine nature.” The *Bráhma Dharmma*—the book so named I mean—quotes with approbation the following sentence from the S'ástras:—“The man who is ignorant and impure gains not the rank of Brahma but returns to the world. The wise man having gained that dignity, is born no more.” XV. 6, 7. Now, this doctrine of the transmigration, not to speak of the other doctrine alluded to in those passages, *viz.*, the final absorption of the human soul into the essence of Brahma,—I say, this doctrine of the transmigration of souls has been, within the last few years, ignored, if not repudiated. No mention

is made of it in elaborate dissertations on future life ; it is not to be found in the latest expositions of the Brâhma faith. It has long since been dead and buried, though its funeral rites have not been honoured with a public celebration.

Now, gentlemen, I trust I should be the last man in the world to find fault with a person for conscientiously changing his opinion. If a man is honestly convinced of the falsity of certain opinions, and of the truth of certain other opinions, and if he abjure the former and embrace the latter, so far from condemning him, I should admire his honesty and sincerity. But if the man, in the case supposed, were to change his opinions periodically as he changes his *châpkân* or his *dhuti* ; were the fluctuations of his opinions to keep time with the phases of the moon, I should be justified in saying of that man, that he had no fixed principles at all. But what are we to think of men, who, whilst setting themselves up as the religious instructors of the illiterate multitude, and the reformers of their country, are not agreed among themselves as to the very foundations of their faith ?—who make organic changes in their religious principles in the course of every five years ?—and modify their theological belief according to the fashion of every varying hour ? Can you have con-

fidence in such men? Whatever others may do, for myself I confess I can have no confidence in such men. Such religious weather-cocks do not suit me. They are like those, described by an old writer, who were "carried about by every wind of doctrine." I like the rock on which I can tread firmly and securely. I do not like the drifting, the treacherous sand. A religion of fluctuating opinions is no religion at all. For what *is* religion? Is it not that which binds us in duty and in love to our Father and our God? But how can a congeries of loose and ever-shifting opinions exert any, the least, influence upon our conduct?

But it seems that the Bráhmas, instead of being ashamed of the fluctuating nature of their faith, glory in the liberty which it gives them. "Our thought," wrote a Bráhma some time ago, "our thought may roam on any subject it chooses, may indulge in any speculation it likes, without endangering our faith. In science and in philosophy, in matters of fancy and in the affairs of every-day life, we are at equal liberty—so far as our religion is concerned—to think, to theorize, to speculate and to believe. We may believe that the universe is but a logical development of ideas, or we may believe that the universe is a mass of substantial matter cognizable alike

by the senses and reason." If this be true,—and I have no reason to doubt it,—Bráhmas, certainly, possess a very wide field of speculation and faith. But there is another class of thinkers, who beat our Bráhma friends hollow on this particular point of liberty of religious speculation. I allude to atheists. They may say with perfect sincerity,—“ We are not trammelled by any fixed modes of faith. Our thought may luxuriate over the immensity of all possible subjects of human speculation. We may believe the universe to have been caused by the fortuitous concourse of atoms, or we may believe it to have had no beginning, itself uncaused and increase. We do not commit ourselves by saying that there is no God, but we simply say that there are no proofs of a God; and should the progressive condition of our species furnish us with unmistakeable evidences of a Creator, we could succumb to the belief without endangering our faith. Our liberty to speculate, to believe, to doubt, is limited only by the bounds of human thought. No discoveries in science, no inventions in art, no developments of human society, can settle the eternal foundations of our faith." Gentlemen, if license of unbounded speculation be a mark of the liberality of a creed, then it must be confessed that the creed of the atheist

is the most liberal in the world ; and to the creed of the Bráhma the second place may justly be assigned.

It may now be asked what precise form Bráhmaism has assumed at present ? What are its leading tenets ? I know not that I am able exactly to answer the question. Past experience tells us that Bráhmaism is subject to periodic changes ; and, for aught I can tell, at this very moment, some new creed may be on the theological anvil at Jorásánko. Indeed, rumour says, that the camp of the Bráhmas has been lately split up into several factions, which factions may eventually settle down into separate sects. I therefore cannot tell you what the creed of the Bráhma Samáj is for the present year—the year of grace 1863,—as I am not aware of the publication in this year of any authoritative book on the subject.

But I can tell you what the creed of the Samáj was two years ago. This book which I now hold in my hand was published exactly two years ago. It is entitled ब्राह्म-धर्मर शत ओ विश्वास, that is, an “ Exposition of the Principles and Creed of the Bráhma Dharmma.” The Creed is expounded in ten discourses by no less a person than the President of the Samáj himself, Bábu Debendra Náth Tagore.

In the Introductory Essay, which is written by another hand, but which has the *imprimatur* of the Samáj, I find the principle stated that, **সহজ জ্ঞান**, that is, *common sense*, or *intuition*, is the source of all our religious knowledge. In the body of the work, this principle is not dwelt upon, but it is taken for granted. This then is a fundamental principle of the Bráhma Samáj, the principle namely, that a Divine revelation, in the ordinary sense of the term, is not necessary to communicate to us the knowledge of God and of the means of salvation,—**সহজ জ্ঞান**, that is the light of nature, or the light of reason, or common sense, or intuition, being sufficient for the purpose. I maintain this principle to be essentially false. I am not about to launch out into a philosophical disquisition on the nature of intuition, and to quote the opinions of philosophers from the days of Aristotle to those of Sir William Hamilton. Last year about this time, and in this very hall, you listened to a very elaborate dissertation on the "Bráhmic Theory of Revelation," in which the arguments of the advocates of the sufficiency of Natural Religion were laid bare, and mercilessly cut to pieces. But even if that Lecture had not been delivered, I should not have deemed it proper to bring before a mixed audi-

ence like the present, abstract arguments for proving the hollowness of the proposition enunciated above. Indeed, a little common sense is sufficient to show that common sense, or **সহজ জ্ঞান**, cannot give to man all the religious knowledge of which he stands in need. Let me, therefore, place before you one or two plain considerations on the subject.

In the first place, I should like to ask the advocates of the theory of **সহজ জ্ঞান**, the question, —How is it, supposing that **সহজ জ্ঞান** is sufficient to give us all the knowledge we require of God and of His will, how is it that most nations of the world have in all ages not been able to know the true and living God, the Creator of the heavens and earth? How are we, on this supposition, to account for Fetichism, for the most debasing forms of idolatry, for gross polytheism? In the second place, supposing that **সহজ জ্ঞান** gives us the right knowledge of God, I should like to know the reason, why the master-minds of antiquity, like Kapila and Gotama and Kanáda and Jayamini and Vyás, Socrates and Plato and Cicero, had less clear knowledge of God and of His attributes, than a boy in one of the lower forms of the General Assembly's Institution, within the walls of which we are now assembled. Take this very book of Bábú

Debendra Náth Tagore. I declare—and I could prove the statement by a comparison of passages, if your time permitted me to do so—I declare that this little book, or rather pamphlet, contains more correct representations of the nature and attributes of God, deeper and truer religious sentiments, and juster apprehensions of a future state, than are to be found in the writings of Vyás or of Plato. Take for instance, Mr. Tagore's delineation of the attributes of the Deity. Here it is—"God is without end, full, without a second, incomparable, of measureless knowledge, of full knowledge, omniscient, bodiless, one only, of measureless goodness, of full goodness, sinless, unchangeable, holy, indefectible, graceful, the form of joy, the form of love, omnipotent, of measureless power ; the agent of creation, preservation and destruction, independent, the holder of all, the ordainer of all, eternal, without beginning and end, immutable, without change, omnipresent, dimensionless." I challenge any man to produce a similar passage from the writings of Plato or of Vyás, or of any other Hindu, Grecian, Roman or Chinese sage, who lived before the Christian era. I believe such a passage cannot be found. How is this, then, to be accounted for ? I have great respect for the talents of Bábu Debendra

Náth Tagore. But will it be pretended that his intellect is more acute than that of Vyás, and his genius more profound than that of Plato? How is it, then, that the Bábu has a more worthy conception of God than any philosopher of antiquity? I will tell you how. He has borrowed it from the Bible, either directly, or through Theodore Parker, Francis Newman, and others of that school, whose vocation it is to pilfer truths from the Bible, and pass them off either as their own discoveries, or as the intuitions of the human mind. But it will be said, that the human intellect can give arguments for proving that those attributes belong to God. So it can. But I am not saying that the representation of God, which I have just read to you, is not conformable to reason; I am only saying that it is not discoverable by reason. I pray you, gentlemen, to mark this distinction. A thing may not be discoverable by human reason, yet when it *is* discovered to us by revelation, it may be easy to shew that it is conformable to human reason. Every school-boy, in our day, not only knows that the soul is immortal, and that there is a future state of existence, but he can bring forward cogent arguments to prove the truth of those doctrines; and yet, if those doctrines had not been revealed to us by super-

human authority, the arguments, perhaps, would never have occurred to us, or if they had occurred to us, they would have failed to convince us. Bábú Debendra Náth Tagore, in the chapter on Future Life, in his book, produces Bishop Butler's celebrated argument to prove the immortality of the soul, and the existence of a future state of being ; and every reader thinks that the reasoning is just, and the conclusion irresistible. And yet we know that the doctrines of the immortality of the soul and of a future life were earnestly debated among ancient philosophers before the introduction of Christianity into the world ; and Cicero, who had an intimate acquaintance with all the philosophical works of antiquity, tells us that, after studying the arguments on both sides, he was undecided as to whether the soul was immortal, and whether there was a future state of being. The case, gentlemen, is like that of Columbus's egg. "Every thing is easy," said Columbus, "after it is accomplished." When life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel,—when Christianity reveals to men the justest notions of God and man, it is doubtless easy for subsequent writers to shew, that those just notions and doctrines are quite in accordance with the dictates of reason and conscience.

Had your time permitted I could easily have placed before you many other arguments, of a plain and practical kind, shewing that **সহজ জ্ঞান** cannot give us true knowledge of God and of our salvation. But I shall content myself with adducing only one other consideration.

We are told by our Bráhma friends that intuition, or **সহজ জ্ঞান**, is our infallible guide in religious matters. Let us see, then, how this infallible guide has served our friends themselves. Looking back at the internal history of the Bráhma Samáj, we find, as we have already seen, that at the first establishment of the Samáj, in the year 1828, **সহজ জ্ঞান** told them that the Vedas were inspired. It was under the direction of this infallible guide that Bábú Debendra Náth Tagore wrote publicly in a newspaper, saying—“We consider the Vedas, and the Vedas alone, as the standard of our faith and principles.” This was the voice of **সহজ জ্ঞান** in the year 1846. What says the oracle now? You all know it. It gives quite a different response. The Vedas are discarded, “paper revelations” are laughed at, and “book-made religions” made a matter of jest. It appears, then, that the voice of **সহজ জ্ঞান** in 1863 is not only different from, but just the opposite of, the voice of **সহজ জ্ঞান** in 1846. Again, **সহজ জ্ঞান** told the Bráhma-s in the year

1850, that the human soul after death passes into animals, and into trees even. And now, as regards that doctrine, the oracle is dumb. And this **সহজ জ্ঞান** is said to be an infallible guide in religious matters ! Infallible, truly ! contradicting in 1856 what it advanced in 1846, unsaying in 1860 what it said in 1850 !

I hope, gentlemen, you will not think me to be an enemy of common sense or **সহজ জ্ঞান**. I trust I have some grains of it, and that small amount convinces me that it is rank idiocy to exalt common sense into the dignity of an infallible guide. Common sense has its uses, but it cannot shed light on our path to heaven. You will do me injustice if you think that I undervalue the human intellect. I do not undervalue it. The human intellect is a noble gift of God. Its powers are truly splendid. When I consider the inconceivable swiftness of thought, glancing, in the twinkling of an eye, "from earth to heaven and from heaven to earth,"—the vast objects which the mind embraces, the whole universe of actually existing entities, and the imaginary universe of possibilities,—when I think of the magnificent faculty of imagination, "bodying forth the forms of things unknown,"—and when, above all, I think, to use the words of Lord Brougham, "of the incredible power of

generalization which has enabled some even to anticipate by ages the discovery of truths, the furthest removed above ordinary apprehension, and the most savouring of improbability and fiction—not merely of a Clairaut conjecturing the existence of a seventh planet and the position of its orbit, but of a Newton learnedly and sagaciously inferring, from the refraction of light, the inflammable quality of the diamond, the composition of apparently the simplest of the elements, and the opposite nature of the two ingredients, unknown for a century after, of which it is composed,”—when I consider all these things, I cannot but regard the human mind as a superb display of Divine power. But, great as is the mind of man, it cannot, especially with the blight of sin upon it, come near the unapproachable Deity ;—it cannot enter the cabinet of the Divine counsels. Apostrophizing the human mind, I may justly address it in the following words of an old dialoguist—“ Canst thou by searching find out God ? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection ? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do ? deeper than hell, what canst thou know ? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea.” This achievement is beyond the power of the mind of man. The moral and religious

history of the world abundantly proves the truth of this statement. Professing themselves to be wise, they became ~~fools~~, and either changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts and creeping things, or identified Him with a figment of their own imagination. The world in its wisdom did not know God, till God Himself was pleased to send us a Teacher from heaven, in the person of His own Son, to impart to us the knowledge of Himself, and to show us the way of everlasting happiness.

You are not to understand, gentlemen, that I am opposed to every *tenet* held by the Bráhmas. There is, of course, something in Bráhmaism in which I believe. The Bráhmas believe in the existence of one God, the Creator of the heavens and earth ; so do I. The Bráhmas believe that there is a future state of existence, in which good <sup>\*</sup>men will be happy and bad men miserable ; so do I. The Bráhmas believe that man is sinful, and that, unless he is delivered from sin, he cannot be happy ; so do I. The Bráhmas believe that worldliness is displeasing to God, and that without purity of heart no man can enter into heaven ; so do I. That there should be something in Bráhmaism to which a Christian can agree, will not appear surprising to

you when you reflect, that all the good that is in Bráhmaism is borrowed, either directly or indirectly, from the Bible. But there is a vast deal in Bráhmaism of which I cannot approve. Its essential principles are all wrong. One of its fundamental tenets I have just considered, *viz.*, that **সহজ জ্ঞান**, or intuition, is sufficient to give us all the knowledge of God and of His will necessary for our salvation ; and I hope, that the remarks I have made upon it, have convinced you that it is a false principle.

I shall now direct your attention to another of its essential doctrines. Bráhmaism admits that man is sinful, and that he is consequently liable to punishment. The question is, how can man regain the lost favour of God ? This is the great question of religion. A system of faith, which does not give a satisfactory reply to this question, is useless to man. Such a system may be suitable to a sinless world —to the inhabitants of the other planets of the solar system, and the denizens of other suns, but it is valueless to a being who has lost the favour of his Maker and is groaning under sin. What answer does Bráhmaism give to this great question ? Here is the answer of the Bráhma Samáj through its President—“ Repentance—genuine repentance, is itself the expiation

of sin. God is not merely a just King, He is also our merciful Father. The promotion of our happiness is His only aim. We are frail creatures ; it cannot be that we shall never slip from the path of virtue. If, by once falling, we are for ever deprived of the favour of the Lifter up of the fallen, then where is our deliverance ? If, by crying before our father, he becomes propitious to us and forgives our offence—if a good man grants forgiveness with an extended heart, when besought to do so—will not, then, our great Father, the all-good and merciful Father, cool a sorrow-stricken heart ? Will He, when He sees their penitent hearts, withhold from them the gift of His pardon ? Never.” It appears, then, that, according to Bráhmaism—and English Deists say the same thing, the fourth of Lord Herbert’s five articles being, “ that we must repent of our sins”—it appears then that, according to Bráhmaism, if a man only repents of his sins, they will be forgiven him. Friends and countrymen, I wish you particularly to pay attention to this point. It is a vital point. It is the back-bone of Deism, and Bráhmaism is nothing else but English Deism under another name. I maintain, and I will prove it, that this cardinal doctrine of Bráhmaism, the doctrine, namely, that mere repentance will procure at

the hands of God the forgiveness of sins, is a deadly delusion. It is a doctrine repugnant to the dictates of reason, contrary to the deductions of experience, useless to man, and dishonouring to God. And before proceeding to the argument, let me once for all remark, that I am not speaking against repentance itself. I too believe that repentance is necessary to pardon. I believe that unless a man repents of his sins, his sins cannot be forgiven. But that is not the doctrine of Bráhmaism. Bráhmaism does not say that repentance is necessary to pardon of sin—it says that repentance is *all* that is necessary for pardon of sin. Nothing else is necessary. Now to the argument.

1. What is repentance? Repentance evidently consists of two parts,—sorrow for sin, and a return to obedience. Which of these two ingredients of repentance procures the Divine forgiveness? Is it return to obedience? But obedience to God is at all times our duty. When we return to the path of obedience, we but do our duty. How can the discharge of present duty cancel its neglect in former times? How can our present obedience compensate for our antecedent transgressions? How can present obedience enable us to do anything more than discharge our present obligations? Or has the

obedience of a returned sinner a retrospective effect on his past life, and is it of greater value than the obedience of a being who had never fallen? Besides, if our present obedience can cancel our former disobedience, why cannot our former obedience cancel our present disobedience? Does the other ingredient of repentance, then, that is, sorrow for sin, procure the Divine forgiveness? But how can sorrow remove demerit? How can present regret avail to lessen my former guilt? Sorrow for sin, certainly, produces an alteration in my present character, but what necessary connection is there between that altered character and my former transgressions? Sorrow for sin, unquestionably, does me present good, by inducing me to return to the path of duty, but how can it obliterate my former omission of that duty?

2. Bráhmas admit that the affairs of this present visible world are under the direction of God. They admit that the arrangements of events in the present life have been regulated by a superintending Providence. Indeed, they believe so intensely in the fact of the natural constitution of things being of Divine appointment, that they look upon it as the chief source of all their religious knowledge. The voice of Nature, then, is the voice of God. Well, what

do we find in Nature with respect to this matter of repentance ? Here is a drunkard. By a long course of intemperance he has lost his health, has spent all his wealth, has made shipwreck of his character, and has thus reduced himself to the sickly, poor, infamous wretch you now see him. He repents. He feels that he has been leading a brutish life. He is sorry for it. He weeps bitterly. He resolves never again to touch the bottle. He becomes a teetotaller. This certainly is a case of repentance. Now, when this man regrets his past life, and resolves on future amendment, do we find that immediately all the effects of his former intemperance disappear ? Do we find health returning to his cheeks ? Do we find his coffers filled with treasure, as in the days before he began his course of intemperance ? Do we find his character at once reformed ? Certainly not. We see, then, that on God's earth mere repentance is not followed by an obliteration of the effects of the former vicious course of life—and if this does not take place in God's kingdom here, why should it take place in God's kingdom hereafter ? What reason is there to suppose, that the rule which obtains in this world, will not obtain in the world to come ? On the contrary, is it not highly probable, is it not morally certain, that the principle which is

acted upon here below, will be acted upon in the future world? If, in the coming life, another and a different principle will be adopted, let the Bráhma prove it. "Our experience of the present state of things," in the words of Archbishop Magee, "evinces that indemnity is not the consequence of repentance here; can the deist [or Bráhma] adduce a counter-experience to show that it will be so hereafter?"\* 3613.

3. In the third place, I remark, that a consideration of the nature of pardon is sufficient to show, that the light of Nature cannot assure us that penitent sinners will be restored to the favour of God. What is pardon or forgiveness? It is the releasing the sinner from liability to punishment. But if the sinner is to be released at all, it must be, from the **very** nature of the thing, a voluntary and free act of Divine Grace. I have committed sin. I have insulted the majesty of the Divine Law. I am therefore liable to punishment. And if I am to be forgiven, it is for God to say so. But how can God communicate to me this information without a Divine revelation? Nature is dumb on the subject. Let me catechise the works of

\* The arguments contained in this paragraph, and the preceding, have been put very much in the words of Archbishop Magee.

Creation—they give no response. Let me catechise the works of Providence—they emit a faint sound ; but that sound is, as I have already shown, on the other side. It tells me that indemnity is not the consequence of repentance. Let me catechise my own conscience—and what do I find there ?—a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. If after this it is still maintained, that God will forgive my sin if I repent of it, how can I know it, unless He communicates to me the knowledge by a revelation ? But the Bráhma disowns a revelation. It comes to this, then, that though God were willing to forgive our sins on account of our repentance, the Bráhma could not possibly know it.

4. But, in the fourth place, if you consider the nature of sin, on the one hand, and the character of God's Holiness, on the other, you will find that it is impossible that pardon should follow mere repentance.

I have told you that the Bráhmas believe that man is sinful. And I have now to tell you that, though they admit the general frailty and sinfulness of the human race, they do not seem to have a just idea of what sin is. What is the Bráhma idea of sin ? Just hear what Bábú Debendra Náth Tagore says, —“ যেমন শরীরের বিকার রোগ, মেষ্টিকুপ মনের বিকার পাপ। আত্মপ্রসাদেই

ମନେର ମୁକ୍ତତା, ଆଜ୍ଞାନିକେ ମନେର ବିକୃତାବନ୍ଧୁ ।” That is, “As disease is the depravation of the body, so is sin the depravation of the mind. In mental purity consists the health of the mind, mental impurity is its depraved state.” I don’t find any other notion of sin in this volume, nor in any other authoritative expositions of the Brâhma faith. I don’t mean to deny that sin is the corruption of the soul. I don’t mean to deny that one of the worst consequences of sin is seen in the degeneracy of our faculties—a blindness of the understanding, a corruption of the will, a depravation of the affections, and a hardening of the conscience. But is this *all*? Is not sin a transgression of the Law of God—a rebellion against the authority of the Ruler of the universe—an insult to His Divine Majesty? Is not sin enmity to God? In vain do I look for this view of sin in the Brâhma books.

Consider, on the other hand, the Holiness of God. I have already said that Bâbu Debendra Nâth Tagore gives a more correct delineation of the attributes of God than is to be found in the works of Vyâs or Plato. But I am far from saying that the delineation is perfect,—it is not so complete as it might have been. Mr. Tagore insists too much on the Goodness of God, too little on His Holiness. I find

him using the words ପରିତ୍ସନପ, ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦୀଷ, “holy,” “indefectible;” ତ୍ରାତ୍ରେ ପାପ ସମର୍ଶ କରିତେ ପାରେ ନାହିଁ, “sin cannot touch Him;” ତିନି ପରିଶୁଦ୍ଧ, “He is pure;” ଅପାପବିନ୍ଦ, “not penetrated by sin.” Is this negative description, the indefectibility of the Divine Essence, a just portraiture of God’s essential Holiness? I do not think so. The Holiness of God is not so much one of His attributes, as the very Essence, so to speak, of the Godhead. Holiness is diffused over all His attributes. His power is holy, His goodness is holy, all His attributes are holy, His nature is holy. The Holiness of God is not merely a freedom from impurity, an exemption from moral defects. His Holiness is infinitely, and eternally active. It is not merely a passive thing. It is not merely that He is not penetrable by sin—it is not merely that sin cannot touch Him; but He hates sin with a perfect hatred,—He cannot look upon sin except with abhorrence,—He regards sin as the most abominable, the vilest thing in the universe. Now, gentlemen, I put it to you, whether your conscience tells you, that a God of such infinitely and eternally active Holiness—a God who hates sin with infinite detestation—I put it to you, whether the essentially holy and sin-hating God will forgive men on account of mere repentance.

What does Bráhmaism really tell me ? It tells me this : that if a sinner were to go to God, and say,—“ O God ! I have sinned against thee, be pleased to forgive my sins,” then God tells him,—“ Very good, my son, I at once forgive you ; see that you be a good child from this time.” Now, I ask, can any man who has a proper notion of sin and an adequate idea of God’s Holiness, ever suppose that God will treat a vile transgressor of His Law in this easy and good-natured manner ?

5. In the fifth place, if you consider God as the just and righteous Ruler of the universe, you will find, that it is impossible that pardon should follow mere repentance. I quite agree with Bráhma in believing that God is a most merciful God. My Bible tells me, that the “ Lord, the Lord God is merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth.” I believe, for my Bible tells me so, that mercy rejoices over all the works of God, and that judgment is with Him a strange work. I believe that God is a merciful Father, but I also believe that God is a righteous King. God has established a government in this world. He is our Governor. As a Governor, He has a right of dominion over His creatures. All men owe Him subjection. He has a right, an inalienable right, to our

allegiance. "With the Supreme Proprietor," says John Howe, "there cannot but be unalienable rights, inseparably and everlastinglly inherent in Him, for it cannot be, but that He, who is the Fountain of all rights, must have them primarily and originally in Himself, and can no more so quit them, as to make the creature absolute and independent, than He can make the creature, God."\* In order to maintain this inalienable right of government, God has enacted Laws,—for there can be no government without laws,—and has attached penalties to the violation of those laws. Now, I put it to you, gentlemen, whether you can believe that God, as the Governor of the children of men, after making penal laws, will forgive every offender on mere repentance? Does not God owe it to Himself, if I may use such an expression without irreverence, as the absolute Sovereign and Lord of all, not to suffer indignities to be offered Him, without visiting them with condign punishment? Does He not owe it to His right of ruling? Does He not owe it to the stability and good government of His kingdom? Does He not owe it to the majesty of His violated Law? What would you think of a king, who let go every criminal in his kingdom unpunished, that chose to express sorrow for his crime?

\* *Living Temple.*

Would you not say that the government of that king was a mockery,—that his laws were a mockery—that anarchy must reign in the kingdom? And can it be supposed for a moment that God, by forgiving every transgressor of His laws on mere repentance, will allow those laws to be contemned, and His kingdom turned into a scene of confusion and misrule?

Bábu Debendra Náth Tagore says, in the extract which I have already read to you, that the only aim of the Divine Government is the promotion of our happiness. He could not have uttered a more fallacious statement. It is true that the end of all earthly governments is, or at any rate, ought to be, the happiness of the subjects. But it is different with the Divine Government. In human governments, both governors and the machinery of government are instituted for the good of the people. But God has made all things for Himself, and the manifestation of His Glory. Hence, the principal design of punishment in the Divine Government is, not so much the reformation of the criminal, which must be the case in all human governments, as the vindication of His Honour, and the manifestation of His Glory. Nor is this anything like private revenge. John Howe profoundly observes, —“But that wherewith we must suppose the

blessed God to be pleased in the matter of punishing, is the congruity of the thing itself, that the sacred Right of His government over the world be vindicated, and that it be understood how ill His nature can comport with anything that is impure ; and what is in itself so highly incongruous, cannot but be the matter of His detestation. He takes eternal pleasure in the reasonableness and fitness of His own determinations and actions, and rejoices in the work of His own hands, as agreeing with the apt, eternal schemes and models, which He hath conceived in His most wise and all-comprehending mind, so that, though He desireth not the death of sinners, and hath no delight in the sufferings of His afflicted creatures, which His immense goodness rather inclines Him to behold with compassion ; yet the true ends of punishment are so much a greater good, than their ease and exemption from the suffering they had deserved, that they must rather be chosen ; and cannot be eligible for any reason but for which also they are to be delighted in, *i. e.*, a real goodness, and conducibleness to a valuable end inherent in them.”\*

6. Sixthly and lastly. Grant, for the sake of argument, that all that I have just now said,

\* *Living Temple.*

under the above heads, goes for nothing. Grant that the doctrine, that repentance is sufficient expiation of sin, is conformable to reason, agreeable to the deductions of experience, compatible with the ideas of human sin and Divine Holiness, and in harmony with the Justice of God ; in a word, grant that the doctrine is true,—I ask, of what use is the doctrine to me, since I cannot repent by my own power ? “ For what,” in the language of Mr. Dods, “ does the sinner do, when he promises himself a future repentance ? He just says, ‘ To-day, nothing shall induce me to abstain from indulging every appetite and every desire ; nothing shall lead me to think of God at all, or to think of Him without dread and aversion ; nothing can make me delight to contemplate His perfections, or find any pleasure in drawing near to Him : to-morrow, I will sit down and mourn, in the utmost anguish of spirit, those indulgences from which nothing will induce me to-day to abstain, and wish a thousand times that I had never yielded to them ; nothing shall give me such delight as the contemplation of those glorious perfections which to-day I hate to think of ; and I shall account nothing such a privilege as to draw near to that Throne of Grace before which nothing shall induce me to-day to bend the knee.’ This is exactly what the sinner

says when he promises himself a future repentance. He promises that to-morrow he will hate with the most cordial detestation that to which to-day he clings with the most ardent affection. He who says, 'To-day I am bowed down with all the weight of threescore years and ten, but to-morrow I am resolved that I shall flourish in all the vigour of unbroken youth,' forms a resolution quite as rational, and quite as much within his power to accomplish, as he who says, 'To-morrow I will repent.' He who says to himself, 'I will make to myself a new heaven or a new earth,' makes a promise just as much within his power to accomplish, as he who says, 'I will make to myself a new heart and a new spirit.' \* \* That man has surely little reason to lay claim to the appellation of rational, who goes so directly in the face of common sense and of all experience, as to teach the sinner that he is capable of repenting, and that repentance will purchase his pardon ; —a tenet which, whether it be more deplorably absurd, or more fearfully fatal, I shall not take upon me to determine."\*

Gentlemen, I have thus at some length expatiated on the doctrine of Brâhma repentance, because it is the corner-stone of the whole edifice

\* *Incarnation of the Eternal Word.*

of Bráhmaism. If that doctrine is proved absurd and pernicious, as I trust I have proved it to your satisfaction, then Bráhmaism crumbles into ten thousand atoms. If the Bráhma doctrine of repentance, which is nothing else but the old deistic doctrine of repentance, is proved untenable, of what use is Bráhmaism to me or to any sinner ? Bráhmaism may make the most marvellous discoveries of human nature—it may contain the most seraphic descriptions of the perfections of God ; but if it tells me not of the way of deliverance from sin, if it brings not about my restoration to the lost favour of God, if it points me not to the path of heaven—of what use is it to me ? It is to me like a tinkling cymbal or a sounding brass. That Bráhmaism is not, in the present state of the country, utterly useless, I admit. Bráhmaism is to me interesting, as it is a revolt against superstition. Bráhmaism is to me interesting, as it is a protest against the idolatry of my country. Bráhmaism is to me interesting, as it is a standing rebuke to those who are immersed in worldly cares, devoted to Mammon worship, and who take no interest in religious matters. But as regards the interests of the sinner—as regards the salvation of the soul—of what worth is Bráhmaism ? Of no worth at all.

I believe there are some Bráhmas present in this hall. Let me in conclusion address a few words to them. Brethren,—for surely ye are my brethren and my kinsmen according to the flesh—brethren, I rejoice that, unlike many of our educated countrymen who have no thought of religion or of God, and whose maxim seems to be, “ Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die,” you take interest in religious matters. I rejoice that you, unlike many who whirl round the giddy circle of dissipation, meet together for purposes of Social Worship. I rejoice that you protest against the cursed idolatry of our common fatherland ; and though some of you, owing to circumstances, connive at idolatrous celebrations in your families, I hope and trust that the day is not far distant, when you shall do so no more. I praise you, brethren, for these things. But I beseech you to reflect on what you are leaning for the salvation of your souls. Bráhmaism, doubtless, has a mission to fulfil in the present state of the country—and if I read the signs of the times aright,—I doubt not that that mission will eventually prove favourable to the propagation of the only true religion, *viz.* Christianity,—I say Bráhmaism, in the present state of the country, will do some good. But of what use will it be to you,

brethren, in the Eternal World ? This very evening I have shewn to you that Bráhmaism is of no use as regards the salvation of the soul. It does not point out to you the way of reconciliation with God. It provides no remedy for that disease of the soul of which you speak. It hangs out no light on your path to heaven. Why then trust in it any longer ? I myself was once a Bráhma, though not in name, yet in reality. I disbelieved in book-revelations, and like you, believed that repentance was a sufficient expiation for sin. I conscientiously believed in those doctrines, and endeavoured to act according to the light I then enjoyed. I became sorry for my sins, and prayed to God to forgive them. But I enjoyed no peace of mind. I could not be sure that He would pardon my sins. I had not His word of promise. This led me to think, what consolation I should have, if I could have God's word of promise. This again led me to enquire more fully, than I had done before, into the proofs of a positive revelation. I also endeavoured to reform my conduct, to amend my life. I tried to banish from my mind all evil thoughts, all sinful desires. The more I tried, the more signally I failed. I began to see my moral deformity more than before. I

began to feel that I was a great sinner, a vile transgressor of God's Law. My good works, such as they were, seemed like filthy rags. Formerly I comforted myself with the thought, that I was better than many of my neighbours, and thus laid the flattering unction to my bosom. But now I appeared before myself in all my naked deformity. I abhorred myself. I was in despair. Then it was that the Lord took mercy upon me. He opened my eyes, and shewed to me Christ, in all the lustre of His mediatorial Glory, and the charms of His ineffable Love. I then saw that Christianity supplied all my wants. I was a breaker of God's Law, but Christ had suffered for my sins—He had vindicated the Justice of God—He had upheld the majesty of the Divine Law. I then saw that Christ, not repentance, was the propitiation of my sins, and not of my sins only, but the sins of the whole world. It was then, also, that I perceived, how true penitence was created in the human heart, not by its own ability, but by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit. I found all my wants supplied in Christ; for Christ was made unto me "Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption."

I solicit you, my Brâhma friends, to do as I have done. I am sure you will not regret it.

As an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ, and one of your own kinsmen, I invite you this night, in His own words, to come to Him.—•

“ Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” “ Ho ! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread ? and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto Me ; hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” Amen.



## LECTURE II.\*

---

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

I believe you all know the circumstances under which I appear before you this evening. On Friday, the 10th day of this month, I delivered, in the General Assembly's Institution, a Lecture, in which I briefly sketched the rise and progress of the Calcutta Bráhma Samáj, dwelt on the changeable character of its creed, and examined two of its leading principles. That Lecture seems to have touched the members of the Calcutta Bráhma Samáj to the quick. Last Saturday, the 18th instant, one of the leaders of the Samáj, Bábu Keshab Chandra Sen, came out in the Samáj building with a discourse which was meant for a reply. And I now stand before you here, not indeed, to give a rejoinder to that reply, but to show you that it was no reply at all.

\* Delivered at the Free Church Institution, on the 25th of April, 1863.

At the very outset of his discourse, the vindicator of the Bráhma Samáj remarked, that the ideas contained in my Lecture were not original ; they were all borrowed from the writings of the Rev. Mr. Dyson and the Rev. Dr. Mullens. Gentlemen, I do not profess to be an original thinker. There are few original thinkers in the world at any time. Nevertheless, the charge is false. The fact is, that what I said in my former Lecture regarding intuition had been urged by me through the press some time before Mr. Dyson appeared on the field of Bráhmic controversy ; and even if that were not the case, the arguments I brought forward were such as would readily suggest themselves to every man possessing an average amount of common sense. With regard to Dr. Mullens's book on Vedantism, the Bráhma Lecturer stated that I had borrowed from it an illustration. Dr. Mullens, when showing the inefficacy of mere repentance to procure salvation, illustrates the argument by taking the case of a drunkard ; and I had made use of that very illustration. The fact is, when I wrote my Lecture I did not know that Dr. Mullens had used that illustration—I did not know that Dr. Mullens had in his book said anything at all on the subject of repentance—indeed, I have

not a copy of Dr. Mullens's book in my library: and it was only on last Saturday at the Bráhma Samáj that I learnt, for the first time, that the illustration I had made use of was found in Dr. Mullens's book. The truth is, the illustration was suggested to my mind—and I dare say to the mind of Dr. Mullens also—by the remarks on repentance made by Archbishop Magee in his celebrated treatise on the Atonement.

It matters little, however, whether my arguments were borrowed or not borrowed. Grant, that they were borrowed arguments—that they were threadbare arguments—the question is, have they been answered? In discussion, old and stale arguments have this disadvantage that they admit of a ready answer. An original argument, coined fresh in the mint of the human mind, often staggers an opponent—he has to cast about for an answer; but stereotyped arguments have stereotyped replies. Have my arguments, then,—call them borrowed, old, stale, threadbare, hackneyed, if you please—have my arguments been answered? Not one of them; as I shall shew you presently.

In my Lecture at the General Assembly's Institution, I had dwelt at some length on the changes which the Bráhma faith had undergone. The defender of the Bráhma Samáj said in reply,

that there were not *changes* but only *one* change, and that was the repudiation of the Vedas. Observe, gentlemen, the Lecturer admits that there has been change,—and a radical change too—only he maintains that the singular number, and not the plural, should have been used. Now, I shall undertake to show that there have been several changes, and not one change only. In the first epoch of the history of Bráhmaism, the Vedas were regarded as a divinely inspired record. That opinion was given up after the return, as we are told, of the four Panditas from Benares, when the volume of Creation was looked upon as the only Divine revelation. That is change, number *one*. In the first period of Bráhmaism, the doctrine of the transmigration of human souls was believed in; in the second period, though not at its commencement, it was ignored, if not openly repudiated. That is change, number *two*. In the first period, it was believed, that the highest happiness to which a human soul could attain was its absorption into the Divine Essence; in the second period that tenet was discarded. That is change, number *three*. During the second period, the volume of Nature, or the Creation, was insisted upon as the only source of theological knowledge,—a volume, it was observed, which “is open to all,

and which contains a revelation clearly teaching, in strong and legible characters, the great truths of religion and morality." During that period, no one ever heard of **সহজ জ্ঞান**, or common sense, or intuition. About four or five years ago commenced the intuitional epoch of the Bráhma Samáj. Whether a deputation of Pañditas was sent over for new light to Mr. Newman in England, or Mr. Parker in America, I know not; but it is pretty certain that, as the second period commenced with the "conversion of Bábu Debendra Náth Tagore to Bráhmaism," so the third, or the present, period commenced with the conversion of Bábu Keshab Chandra Sen. In this period, we don't hear of the volume of Nature, we hear only of the "rock of intuition;" and we were told the other night, that all Bengal is now filled with the cry of "Intuition, Intuition!" Here, then, is change, number *four*.

It is said, that the changes were conscientiously made. When light was darted into the mind of Bábu Debendra Náth Tagore from the holy city of Kas'i, he threw away the Vedas; he repudiated the doctrine of metempsychosis; he disbelieved in annihilation. When again a flood of fresh light was poured from Boston and from London upon the President of the Samáj, he commenced to lisp the name of intuition. The

President manfully avowed his convictions as soon as they started in his mind. The faith of the Samáj was thus conscientiously changed. Granted. But what has that to do with the point in hand? The question is not, *how* the changes were made, but, *were* the changes made? I do not enquire into the motives of the men who made the changes, but simply into the fact of those changes having taken place. I did not say that the Samáj was actuated by interested motives in so often changing its creed; I only said that it *had* often changed its creed. I may not be acquainted with the motives, or the causes, of the changes; but the fact of their occurrence remains. I may not be able to assign the reason of the chameleon's changing its colour constantly, but the fact is patent to me that the chameleon does change its colour frequently; and I think I have proved that the nature of the Bráhma faith is chameleon-like. I repeat what I said in my first Lecture: I can understand a private individual changing his opinions in the course of his enquiries, but it does certainly appear strange that men, who set themselves up as the religious instructors of the illiterate multitude and the reformers of their country, should not have made up their minds as to the foundations of their faith.

The application of the epithet “chameleon-like” to the nature of the Bráhma faith, reminds me of the criticism of the defender of Bráhmaism on a passage of my Lecture. I had said, that the Bráhmas “modified their theological belief according to the fashion of every varying hour.” On this the Lecturer grew eloquent and challenged the audience to shew, that the Bráhma Samáj had altered, and was altering, its creed every day, every hour. I need scarcely remark that the challenge was absurd. A tolerable acquaintance with the idiom of the English language would have convinced the challenger that, when I uttered the sentence just quoted, I did not, and could not, mean to say, that the Samáj was every day, and every hour of the day, and every minute of the hour, and every second of the minute, engaged in changing its theological belief ; but I meant to say, and did say, that the creed of the Samáj was of a changeable character—a point on which there cannot now be the least doubt in the mind of any one present in this Hall.

But it may be said—Suppose there have been changes in the creed of the Bráhma Samáj, what then ? Nothing, except that one cannot have confidence in the Samáj. One knows not what the Samáj will be *at* next. To-dá

Samáj holds the Vedas to be inspired, to-morrow it ridicules the idea of "paper revelations," and the third day it may land itself in absolute scepticism—at any rate, there is no security that it will not do so. The Bráhma Lecturer compared Bráhmaism to a ship ploughing the briny deep, now and then veering, but on the whole making progress. Yes, it is like a ship, but a ship tempest-tossed on the waves of error, without a rudder to regulate its movements, without a chart to point out the course it ought to take, without a compass to shew its bearings, without sun, moon, or stars to give data for finding its latitude and longitude ! It is a ship at the mercy of every wave, it is the sport of every breeze. It goes carcering over the waters, but it may sink any time in the abyss of error, or be stranded on the shoals of infidelity. The course it has already described, has been sufficiently erratic. A jolly breeze blew from Benares, and the ship not only changed its course, but it went on in a direction diametrically opposite to that in which it had before been going. A side wind blew from Boston, and another from London, and the two winds were swelled into a brisk gale, and blew upon the ship, and it veered and tacked about. And who is there in this assembly that can give me

the assurance that, some day, a storm blowing from the direction of France, or some other tempestuous region, may not overtake the ill-fated vessel, and dash it against the rocks of scepticism ?

Our Bráhma friends, not being able to deny that changes have several times been made in the creed of the Samáj, admit the fact of the change, and putting on a bold face, say,—You call it change ; we call it progress. Call it by any name you please,—progress, or march, or ovation, or triumph. “What’s in a name ?” The giving of a new name will not alter the nature of the thing itself. What is progress ? What is progress, for instance, in the construction of an edifice ? The foundations are first laid, the walls are next raised, beams are then put upon the walls, and the work of construction proceeds apace, till the building is completed. Now, what is the history of the construction, so to speak, of the edifice of Bráhmaism ? Rájáh Rám Mohan Roy, no ordinary mason, built the foundations of the Samáj deep on the Vedas. After the death of the projector, the work of construction, entrusted to other hands, progressed, though very slowly. After the walls of the edifice of Bráhmaism had been raised, it was thought desirable to give to the

building the graces of primitive Vedic architecture. But no one was found in Bengal, who had mastered the principles, as well as the details, of Vedic architecture. Accordingly four Panditas, who gave promise of future excellence, were sent to Benares, the ancient seat of Sanscrit lore. They were to be initiated there into the mysteries of the sacred craft. They remained in the Holy City some three years. They returned. The people of Calcutta thought, that the construction of Bráhmaism was now to be gone about most vigorously. They were expecting that the edifice was about to be adorned with Vedic pillars. But no. The four Panditas had discovered that the Vedic foundations were all rotten. Bábú Debendra Náth Tagore would not at first believe the fact. Were not the foundations of the Samáj the granitic fragments of the original primitive formation of the Vedas? Colebrooke had long ago pronounced those foundations rotten, and Missionaries had often warned the Samáj of the insecurity of its basis. But hitherto they had given no heed to the warning. On the return, however, of the Panditas from Benares, the Samáj saw clearly that the basis was unstable ; and it was resolved to remove it. Down fell the walls ; the foundations were dug up ; a new site was selected ; and a new building was com-

menced on a different basis—the basis of Natural Religion, the volume of Nature. You call this progress in Bráhmaism ! Is it not the destruction of one form of Bráhmaism, and the commencement of another ? They went on for some time constructing on this new basis—the basis of Natural Religion ; but this basis too was discovered to be insecure. They had heard of the discovery by a hardy mountaineer of Scotland, Sir William Hamilton, of a certain rock, called the “ rock of intuition ;” and on this rock it was resolved to base Bráhmaism. So the second building was also taken down, the foundations were dug up, and the site virtually changed from Jorásanko to Colootollah.

You will perceive, gentlemen, that some of the changes which Bráhmaism has undergone are no superficial changes. They are radical changes. They affect the very basis of the system, or rather they make three different systems. The first system was Vedism, or Vedantism ; the second, Naturalism ; and the third and present, Intuitionism. How long this last system will remain, it is impossible to say ; but I hope that after this there will be real progress in the Bráhma Samáj. When the present fit of intuition is over, I hope and trust—and I pray to God that it may be so—

the Samáj will return to the acknowledgment of a book revelation ; not, indeed, to the acknowledgment of the Divine inspiration of the Vedas, but of the Bible. That would be real progress. I pray to God most fervently that that may be the future of the Bráhma Samáj. I shall rejoice to see the day when the Calcutta Bráhma Samáj makes real progress, when it is founded on the "rock Christ"—then, indeed, and then only, will the Samáj be strong. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. It will then, and only then, be fair as the moon, bright as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. May the Almighty, in whose Hands are the hearts of the children of men, grant that these hopes may be realised.

The advocate of the Bráhma Samáj not only asserts that the change of its creed has been only one—which we have shown not to be the case—not only maintains that the change is one of progress—which we have also shown not to be the case,—but he rebuts the argument upon us, by endeavouring to show that Christianity has undergone far greater changes. As if he had said—" You expatiate on the changes in the creed of the Bráhma Samáj, you ought to have remembered the proverb that 'people who live in glass houses should not pelt others

with stones.' You speak of changes in Bráhmaism, but look at your Christianity. Has it not undergone a thousand times greater changes than Bráhmaism? Look at the Papists. Of what superstitions they are guilty? Look at the Adamites,—what enormities did they practise! Look at the Christians of the Confederate States of America,—don't they justify the horrible system of slavery by appealing to the Bible? If Bráhmaism is to be found fault with for its changes, *a fortiori* should Christianity be found fault with for its innumerable changes." This is the argument—and you will admit that I have put it strongly. Now, this argument is a gross fallacy.

If Bráhmaism had an authoritative standard, if there were different sects of Bráhmaism in the country, if these sects had interpreted the authoritative standard in different ways, and if I had pointed to these variations of opinion as an evidence of the changeable character of Bráhmaism, then the argument would have had some force. But the cases are not parallel. We have seen this evening that Bráhmaism has several times changed its principles, but Christianity has NEVER changed its principles. The principles of Bráhmaism are not fixed down in a book, they are based on intuition; but

the intuitions of men are not identical. The history of the religions of the world proves this beyond the shadow of a doubt. Bráhmaism is what Bábú Debendra Náth Tagore thinks, what Bábú Keshab Chandra Sen thinks. In fact, if any one were to ask me the question—what is Bráhmaism as to its basis?—I could not give a better answer to the question than by conjugating the verb “to think” in the indicative mood and in the present tense. The best definition of Bráhmaism is—“I think, thou thinkest, he she or it thinks; we think, ye or you think, they think.” That is Bráhmaism as to its basis. Hence, it is no marvel, that its principles, its tenets, its doctrines, are constantly changing. The principles of Christianity are, on the other hand, fixed and certain. They may be misunderstood by sectaries, but Christianity is not responsible for their misunderstandings. There may be a thousand sects, all having their own misconceptions of the principles of Christianity; but Christianity is not chargeable for those misconceptions. There may be Adamites and Eremites and Ebionites and Anchorites and Marionites and Antidico-Marionites and Carmelites and Monothelites and Taborites and Irvingites; there may be Arians and Manichæans and Massalians and

Pelagians and Arminians and Latitudinarians ; there may be Carthusians and Paulicians ; there may be Collegiants and Mendicants ; there may be Papists and Pictists and Anabaptists and Catharists, and Brownists and Davidists ; there may be Quakers and Shakers and Ranters and Jumpers—and all these sects may have their own vagaries—nevertheless, Christianity is independent of those vagaries. The principles of Christianity are sure, certain, immutable, eternal. Amid the mutations of opinions, and the conflicts of sectaries, they remain unchanged. They may be misunderstood, misconceived, misrepresented, misinterpreted. Nevertheless, they are the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. They lie imbedded in this Holy Volume, which I have now in my hands. They are treasured up in this casket of precious gems. Of this book, God is the Author, and salvation is its subject.

“ Most wondrous book ! bright candle of the Lord !  
 Star of eternity ! The only Star  
 By which the bark of man can navigate  
 The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss  
 Securely ! Only Star which rose on Time,  
 And, on its dark and troubled billows, still,  
 As generation, drifting swiftly by,  
 Succeeded generation, threw a ray  
 Of Heaven’s own light, and to the hills of God,  
 The eternal hills, pointed the sinner’s eye.  
 By prophets, seers, and priests and sacred bards,

Evangelists, apostles, men inspired, set  
 Apart and consecrated to declare  
 To Earth the counsels of the Eternal One,  
 This book, this holiest, this sublimest book,  
 Was sent."

Before leaving this part of the subject, I may take notice of a point connected with it, though the Bráhma Lecturer, in the delicious disorder which characterized his discourse, brought it forward in a subsequent part of his Lecture. Those of you that were present at the Bráhma Samáj, last Saturday night, must remember, that at one time it seemed as if the Lecturer was about to fall into hysterics. You must remember how pathetically he exclaimed—"Rather slay us, rather put the knife to our throats, than call us atheists." I confess, when I saw the Lecturer in such a plight, I began to reproach myself for having used language calculated to give so much pain to one of my fellow-creatures, and one of my own countrymen. But a moment's reflection convinced me that, what gave such pain to the Lecturer was the hallucination of his own brain. Who called Bráhma-s atheists? I never called them by that offensive name. How could I call them atheists, when I knew that they believed in the existence of a God? What I said was merely this, that it seemed that some Bráhma-s gloried

in the uncertainty of their creed, and I quoted a passage, from the published writings of a Bráhma, to prove the assertion. I then remarked that, "if licence of unbounded speculation be a mark of the liberality of a creed, then it must be acknowledged that the creed of the atheist is the most liberal in the world, and to the creed of the Bráhma the second place may justly be assigned." This, you observe, is quite a different thing from calling Bráhma atheists. But the zealous defender of the Bráhma faith mistook it for a charge of atheism.

I now come to the remarks of the advocate of Bráhmaism on what I had said of intuition. You remember, gentlemen, the drift of my remarks on a former occasion. Admitting the existence of intuition, and taking it for granted for argument's sake that it was sufficient to give us a right knowledge of God and His will, I asked, how fetishism, idolatry and polytheism, which have exercised in all ages the belief of most nations in the world, could be accounted for? I further asked, supposing that intuition gives us the right knowledge of God, how it was that the great philosophers of antiquity, of India and of Greece, for example, had less clear knowledge of God and of a future state of existence, than a school-boy in our day. In reply

to these questions, the defender of Bráhmaism spent a whole hour—I think it was more than an hour—in proving that there was such a thing as intuition. That discourse on the reality and the attributes of intuition was uncalled for. It might well have been reserved for a class of Bráhma catechumens. It had nothing to do with the point then under consideration. Who denied intuition? I did not deny it. The question was not, whether there is such a thing as intuition? It was admitted on both sides, that there was such a thing. But the question was, “Admitting the existence of intuition, is it sufficient to give us a right knowledge of God and of His will?” That was the question. And I appeal to this assembly, when such was the question, whether it was not a piece of impertinence for a whole tedious hour to lecture to us that there is such a thing as intuition.

Gentlemen, I don’t deny the existence of intuition. I admit that there is such a faculty as common sense, or practical reason, or intuition, or any other name by which it may be called. I only say that it is not sufficient to give us a right knowledge of God. And this inability is not to the discredit of intuition; the discredit belongs rather to those who would ascribe to it

a power which it does not pretend to possess. It is not to the discredit of my nose that I cannot see with it. It is not to the discredit of my eyes that I cannot smell with them. It is not to the discredit of my ear that I cannot taste with it ; neither is it discreditable to my palate, that I cannot hear by means of it. The Author of human nature never meant that I should hear with my palate and taste with my ear, that I should see with my nose and smell with my eyes. Neither did He intend that we should by means of intuition be able to attain to all necessary knowledge of God, and of His attributes, and of His will regarding us.

But it seems that the Brâhmas have virtually given up the theory of intuition. We were told last Saturday night, that Brâhmic intuition is not infallible. But if it be not infallible, then of what use is it in matters of religion ? My intuition tells me that God is merciful, but my intuition may be mistaken ; therefore I may be mistaken in supposing that God is merciful. Is this uncertainty to be the basis of religion ? And this basis is called the *rock* of intuition. To me this pretended rock seems to be more loose than sand, more unstable than water.

We were told last Saturday night, that intuition *alone* is not sufficient. We require edu-

cation also. You perceive, gentlemen, that this is virtually to give up the theory of Bráhmic intuition. Bráhmaism is not, then, based simply on the rock of intuition. To the rock of intuition must now be superadded the elaborate masonry of education. But grant, for the sake of argument, that intuition *plus* education are sufficient to give us a right knowledge of God and of our salvation ; I ask, had Kapila and Vyás and Socrates and Plato no education ? Will it be pretended that Bábú Keshab Chandra Sen has had a better education than Vyás and Plato ? How is it, then, that the Bábú has better theological knowledge than the great Achárjyas and Munis and Rishis of antiquity ? “Ah ! but,” says the advocate of Bráhmic intuition, “ah, but you forget that there has been a great progress in theological knowledge since the days of Vyás and Plato.” Yes, I admit that there has been great progress, but let me ask you—to what has that progress been owing ? What is the cause of that progress ? Read the history of the world—especially the moral and religious history of the world. What do you find ? You find that, before the commencement of the Christian era, the moral and religious aspect of the world was enveloped in the thick mantle of darkness. Read the writings of

the Hindu sages and of the Greek philosophers, but read especially the philosophical works of Cicero, who lived only a few years before the commencement of the Christian era, and who has given a bird's-eye view of the moral and religious systems of the Greek philosophers. Cicero died only 43 years before the birth of Christ. And what account does Cicero give of the state of morality and religion up to his own time? What account does Diogenes Laertius give in his *Lives of the Philosophers*? Why, you find contradictory and absurd notions entertained of God and His attributes, of the nature of His worship, of human duty, of human destination, of ordinary morality, of the immortality of the soul, of a future state. The Hindu philosophers tell the same tale. Down to the commencement of the Christian era, you find in the world uncertainty, doubt and darkness, regarding matters of morality and religion. Read again the moral and religious history of the world, or rather of Europe, of the first and second centuries of the Christian era, and you find that the uncertainty, the doubt and the darkness, have all disappeared. You find, in the writings of the Fathers, just and worthy conceptions of God and of His attributes, rational and clear notions of human

duty and human destiny, of morality, and of a future life. In the course of a few years, you find a mighty progress, or rather revolution—for it is not progress in the usual sense of that word. It is a sudden revolution. It seems as if, in the course of a few years, in the course of a short generation, a flood of light had been poured on the moral and religious world. It seems as if the windows of heaven had been opened, and deluges of moral and religious light had been poured upon the nations. It seems as if the moral and religious firmament of the world had been lighted up with the lustres of a universal illumination. You wonder where this illumination came from, and who brought it on. Read the history of Judea 70 years after the death of Cicero, and the mystery will be solved. You read of an apparently obscure man going about in the cities and towns of Judea and Galilee, accompanied by a band of equally obscure fishermen. That Man spake as never man spake. Words of unearthly wisdom proceeded from His lips. He brought down truth from heaven. He brought life and immortality to light. It was that GOD-MAN that illumined the moral and religious world. It was JESUS CHRIST that compassed this marvellous revolution in the moral and religious world. Since

that time no progress has been made in the development of religious truth. For four thousand years since the creation of the world had human intuition and human education been at work, but they had brought out nothing but vagueness, doubt, uncertainty and darkness. In the Fulness of Time Christ came and dispelled the darkness. And for the last eighteen hundred years, since the appearance of Christ upon earth, human intuition and human education have been again at work, but not *one truth*, I mean moral and religious truth, has been discovered which Jesus Christ did not teach. I challenge any man in this assembly—I challenge the whole of the Bráhma Samáj, to point to me one moral and religious truth, since discovered by intuition, which is not found in the New Testament. No such truth can be pointed out. What conclusion, then, are we to draw from these facts? What but this?—That all the progress in the moral and religious world is owing only to this book which is in my hands—this revelation of God's will.

One point more, and I shall have done with the subject of intuition, at least for the present. The defender of Bráhmic intuition quoted a sentence from my lecture, in which I charged Theodore Parker, F. W. Newman and others

of that school, with pilfering God's truths, and passing them off either as their own discoveries or as the intuitions of the human mind. On this the Brâhma Lecturer remarked that those truths were God's truths, and Parker and Newman used them for their own comfort. The truths of the New Testament are certainly God's truths. But they have not been discovered by human intuition. Jesus Christ brought them down to earth. If Mr. Newman—I speak not now of Mr. Parker, for poor Theodore Parker has gone to his account—receives the whole of these truths, comes to the Lord Jesus Christ, worships Him and looks upon Him as his Saviour, he shall certainly be entitled to the name of a wise man. But this is not what Mr. Newman does. Mr. Newman, I shall suppose, goes to the New Testament, and says, "I like some of your truths, they please me. I shall take some of them." The New Testament says to him, "Christ has brought those truths from heaven. No man could discover them before His time, only some glimpses of them He had in past ages given to the Jewish nation. But if you receive only a part of these truths, it will avail you nothing; and it is a portion of these truths that Christ is God, and that He has laid down His life for the salvation of the human

race." Mr. Newman replies, "I don't like all your truths, I will take some of them;" and away he goes and publishes them to the world, saying—"Look, how beautiful and sublime truths can be discovered by intuition. The man Jesus Christ uttered these truths." Gentlemen, this last statement is partly true and partly false. It is true that those truths were uttered by the Lord Jesus Christ—nevertheless they are not the discoveries or the developments of intuition. They were not educated *subjectively* from the human mind—they are *objective* truths given to man by means of a positive and an external revelation. I charge Newman and others with pilfering God's truths, because they borrow from the external book-revelation which God has given, and ascribe them to the intuition of the human mind.

I now come to the subject of repentance, the consideration of which will not detain me long; not because the subject is less important than the one I have been just discussing, but because, of the six objections I had brought in my last lecture against the Brálmic theory of repentance, *viz.* the theory that mere repentance is sufficient for our salvation, not one has been answered, not one has been *attempted* to be

answered. If an attempt is ever made to answer them, I shall not fail to examine the successfulness or unsuccessfulness of that attempt. The Bráhma lecturer said, that I had "pooh-pooh'd repentance" in my last lecture. I did no such thing. When I was about to examine the nature of Bráhmic repentance, I guarded myself with a qualification. I said that I was not speaking against repentance itself. I believe that repentance is necessary to the pardon of sin. But I at the same time believe that mere repentance will not do. Something else is required,—that something is the atonement by Christ. This surely is not to disparage genuine repentance.

The advocate of Bráhmaism, alluding to an extract I had made from Dod on the "Incarnation," regarding the impossibility of a man, by his own unaided powers, truly to repent, said that I was talking of future repentance. This is another instance of the strange misconceptions under which the lecturer laboured. The passage referred to did not speak of death-bed repentance, or repentance to be reserved to some future day, but it spoke of the inability of a sinner to repent whenever he chooses. For true penitence can be produced in the heart only by the Spirit of God.

If I understood the lecturer aright—for it is not easy always to catch his meaning amid the cloud of high-sounding words signifying nothing—I say, if I understood the lecturer aright, he said that, so far from having low views of human sin and Divine justice, with which I had charged the creed of the Samáj, it was the doctrine of the Samáj that punishment is necessarily associated with sin, that sin must be punished and punished adequately, that no sinner will ever escape punishment even though he repents, and that a Bráhma sinner may be punished through “eternal ages.” What a doleful prospect does Bráhmaism hold out to sinners! I have committed sin. I am under the displeasure of the Almighty; the sword of Divine justice is hanging over me. I have a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. My whole soul is seized with trembling. I feel as if I was about to be hurled into hell. What consolation does Bráhmaism give me? Why, Bráhmaism tells me that, do what I will, I must suffer punishment. There is no escape. I am fated to be punished. Sin must be punished, is heaven’s irreversible decree. I have sinned, I must be punished, it may be through “eternal ages.” [The Bráhma lecturer did certainly make use of the expression “eternal

ages," for I noted it down there at the time with my pencil; but let me grant that he did not mean to use the phrase—it was a mere slip of the tongue. This is what Bráhmaism tells me. Alas! what poor consolation! I must be punished, and punished *adequately* to my sins. Adequately to my sins! then the punishment must be eternal; for sin is an infinite evil; and the adequate punishment of an infinite evil must be infinite—but as a finite being like man is incapable of suffering punishment infinite in degree, the punishment then must be infinite in duration, or in other words, eternal. But grant that punishment will not be eternal—it may be at any rate for millions of years. And if it be so, what a poor comforter does Bráhmaism prove itself to be! I had rather be a believer in Pouranika Hinduism. Hinduism is at least a better comforter than Bráhmaism. Hinduism promises me, if not eternal happiness, at least happiness for many ages in heaven. And though I shall have to come down again to earth, I shall have a long period of enjoyment. Away, away then with Bráhmaism. I had rather go back to Hinduism.

But the Bráhma steps forth and says—all that is very fine, but you are forgetting that all punishment inflicted by God is *remedial*. By

punishment God reforms the sinner. The punishment, in fact, is salutary to man. It has for its object the salvation of the sinner.

All punishment is remedial ! The object of punishment is the salvation of the sinner ! Then, gentlemen, there is no punishment in the ordinary sense of the term. Then don't call it punishment, call it rather a blessing ; and instead of saying that the idea of sin is inseparably and necessarily connected with the idea of punishment, say rather the idea of sin is inseparably and necessarily connected with the idea of blessing. All punishment is remedial ! the very object of punishment is the salvation of the sinner ! Then hell becomes converted into a Reformatory Institution where souls are purified and prepared for heaven, a nursery of the children of God, and an excellent auxiliary to heaven—an idea of hell repugnant to the general sense of the human race. All punishment is remedial ! the very object of punishment is the salvation of the sinner ! Then the Bráhma has scarcely any notion of sin ; indeed, in my last Lecture, it would seem, I gave him credit for deeper ideas of sin than he appears really to have. For if sin is to be inflicted with only a remedial punishment—if it is to be eventually followed with a blessing, then it cannot be a very heinous

thing—it cannot be the vilest and the most abominable thing which the Lord hates. All punishment is remedial ! the very object of punishment is the salvation of the sinner ! Then it is a mockery to talk of the justice of God, and I was wrong in my last Lecture to give credit to the Brâhma Samâj for having some idea of Divine justice. For, if sin is visited only with a remedial punishment,—if treason against the King of heaven, affront to the Divine Majesty, and a pouring of contempt on God's Law are returned eventually with benedictions and not curses, what becomes of the Divine justice ? It becomes simply a mockery.

No, gentlemen, the punishment which God inflicts on sinners, in the coming life, is not of a remedial character. I repeat what I said in my last Lecture on this subject. It is true, that the end of all earthly governments is, or at any rate, ought to be, the happiness of the subjects. But it is different with the Divine Government. In human governments, both governors and the machinery of government are instituted for the good of the people. But God has made all things for Himself and the manifestation of His glory. Hence the principal design of punishment in the Divine Government is not so

much the reformation of the criminal, which must be the case in all human governments, as the vindication of His honor. Nor is this anything like private revenge. John Howe profoundly observes,—“ But that wherewith we must suppose the blessed God to be pleased in the matter of punishing, is the congruity of the thing itself, that the sacred right of His Government over the world be vindicated, and that it be understood how ill His nature can comport with anything that is impure, and what is in itself so highly incongruous, cannot but be the matter of His detestation. He takes eternal pleasure in the reasonableness and fitness of His own determinations and actions ; and rejoices in the work of His own hands, as agreeing with the apt, eternal schemes and models which He hath conceived in His most wise and all-comprehending mind, so that though He desireth not the death of sinners, and hath no delight in the sufferings of His afflicted creatures, which His immense goodness rather inclines Him to behold with compassion : yet the true ends of punishment are so much a greater good than their ease and exemption from the suffering they had deserved, that they must rather be chosen, and cannot be eligible for any reason but for which also they are to be delighted in,

*i. e.*, a real goodness, and conducibleness to a valuable end inherent in them.”

The Bráhma Lecturer ended his discourse the other evening with an exposition of the Bráhmic theory of atonement; permit me, gentlemen, to conclude this Lecture with giving you a brief view of the only true atonement.

Reconciliation between two parties, at variance with each other, cannot be made without removing the causes of their disagreement and meeting the claims of both. What then are the causes of the variance between God and man? Man cannot possibly have any charge to prefer against God. He cannot possibly have any claims upon his Maker, whose will he has wickedly disregarded, and whose laws he has wantonly violated. If God had no charge to prefer against man except his dread to come to Him, if there were no obstructions to the full flow of His mercy—obstructions arising from the altered state of man and His own immutable attributes, the work of reconciliation might be effected by a simple proclamation of pardon. But the work under consideration was not susceptible of such an easy performance. There were formidable difficulties in the way. Man had sinned, had insulted the majesty of His Law. God is just and immutably holy. Hence,

in unison with all His attributes, God could not proclaim pardon to fallen man without satisfying His inexorable justice. He could not open the doors of heaven for the free admission of rebels and sinful creatures, unless they expiated for their transgressions, and fulfilled the whole law of God. The Son of God undertook to fulfil those conditions. But the Divine Mediator between heaven and earth had to effect reconciliation between parties infinitely unequal to each other. It therefore behoved the Reconciler to add to His Divinity the nature of man. Therefore, "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

The means by which our blessed Lord accomplished His great work, are His obedience and His death. Before reconciliation could be effected, the dishonours of the Law had to be repaired, and a perfect obedience rendered to it. This was, accordingly, the chief and sole business of our Lord during the few years that He dwelt amongst men. The fulfilment of the will of God was the one idea that animated our blessed Saviour. The rendering to the law of God a complete obedience in virtue of His mediatory

office was His meat and His drink. The whole series of our Lord's actions, from His birth to His death, was one continued obedience rendered to God's Law. The Divine Law was never covered with so signal honour, as in its observance by Jesus. Never before in the history of the past eternity had it obtained so splendid an illustration, and so glorious a fulfilment. Amid the happy bowers of Paradise, Adam and Eve in their holy state had no doubt for a short period rendered to it a complete obedience. The bright inhabitants of the realms of glory, angels, and cherubim, and seraphim, and principalities, and thrones, are doubtless paying homage to the Divine Law and admiring her as "the mother of their peace and joy." But Adam and Eve, in their sinless state, and angels and archangels in heaven, are created beings, and therefore infinitely inferior in dignity to the Lord Jesus Christ. He who in His Divine nature is the spring of all power, the source of all justice, and the fountain of law itself, condescended, in the capacity of a Mediator, to render to that law a complete observance. Hence it may be said emphatically, that the "law was magnified and made honorable." But this is not all. A perfect observance of the Law of God is not the only thing due by men to Him. The justice of

God requires that the transgressions of men should be punished. It was necessary that the Captain of our salvation should be made perfect through sufferings. For discharging this part of His mediatory office, for satisfying God's justice, for enduring the punishment justly due to human transgressors, the Son of God expired on Calvary. The cup of God's wrath was offered Him as the Substitute of sinners. He drank it to the lees. The sword of retributive justice was directed against Him. He bore the stroke. The Lord of glory yielded up His spirit. "It is finished," were amongst the last words of the dying Saviour. The obstructions to the communication of God's grace to men were thus removed. The work of redemption, the restoration of offending men to the lost favour of God was now complete.

How precious is this doctrine to him who is overwhelmed with a sense of his sinfulness, and finds no relief in anything in himself ! How precious to him who is laden with sin and iniquity, and who thus finds rest in Jesus Christ, who has healed up the breach between God and men ! A clear spring of crystal water is not more cheering to the thirsty traveller in the sandy deserts of Arabia: the blaze of the noon-day sun not more pleasing to the captive

immured in a dingy dungeon ; relief not more welcome to the bosom oppressed with grief and sadness, than is the doctrine of reconciliation consolatory to a soul overpowered with a sense of its sinfulness. What are all the noisy pleasures of mirth and festivity, the comforts of wealth, the joys of intellectual gratification, compared to the placid security, the peaceful calm, derived from the blessed doctrine of reconciliation ! The joy that brightens the death-pale countenance of a malefactor, on his way to the gallows, at the receipt of the king's pardon, is faint, compared with the unspeakable delight of a sinner at hearing the glad tidings of reconciliation with God. The sinner's sad heart is lightened of its charge ; his lamentations are converted into rejoicings ; the spirit of heaviness is changed into one of buoyant cheerfulness ; and the groanings of despair into songs of praise. His breast, hitherto agitated with the surges of despondency, becomes calm ; and a holy peacefulness spreads itself around the sinner pardoned of his iniquity. His views undergo a change. His Almighty Maker, who had hitherto been to him a consuming fire, becomes to him a God of love ; the unspotted holiness of His character, which formerly terrified him, becomes to him the earnest and pledge

of his eternal safety ; and death, erewhile to him the king of terrors, becomes the harbinger of lasting peace and the conductor to the mansions of glory. Blessed doctrine this, which takes away man's enmity, and reconciles God to him, which breaks down the barrier of heavenly communion, and promotes amicable intercourse between the human race and their God ! Blessed doctrine this, which binds up the broken-hearted, proclaims liberty to the captives, and gives to mourners beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness ! Blessed doctrine this, which restores man to the lost favour of God, adopts him into the heavenly family, and crowns him with ineffable blessings. May you all, friends and countrymen, whether Bráhmas or not, have grace given to you to receive this blessed doctrine. Amen.

---



## LECTURE III.\*

---

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

I cannot cast mine eyes round this spacious hall, crowded as every part of it is with anxious listeners, without feeling deep thankfulness to God Almighty. I thank God that the ingenuous youth of my beloved father-land take so lively an interest in religious discussion. I thank God that, unlike the youth of other countries who oftener obey the call of pleasure than that of duty, so many of you have been coming unsolicited, from week to week, to listen to lectures on religious subjects. Nor is the spirit of religious enquiry confined only to those of my countrymen who have attended these lectures. Wherever I roam in this vast metropolis, whatever associations of young men I visit, almost everywhere I find religion the chief object of enquiry.

\* Delivered at the Free Church Institution, on the 8th of April, 1864.

Next to the blessing of God, which is all in all, the two causes that have chiefly contributed to create this spirit of enquiry are, English education and Christian Missions. These two causes, however, would not have been so effective, but for one happy circumstance. The circumstance to which I allude is, the profound religiousness which underlies the Hindu character. In spite of what shallow thinkers and superficial observers may say to the contrary, the Hindus have been, are now, and, I trust, will always be, though in a nobler and truer sense, the most religious of all the branches of the mighty Aryan race. Read, on the one hand, the history of the Hindus,—if the Hindus, indeed, have a history—and the histories of the other branches of the Aryan race, on the other hand, and you will perceive the truth of my statement. The power-loving Persian, the enthusiastic Greek, the haughty Roman, the mercurial Frenchman, the practical Anglo-Saxon, and the wily Slavonian, have cut, or are cutting, a conspicuous figure in the political history of the world; but India has yet had no political history of her own. While the younger branches of the Aryan race were carrying on wars with themselves and with their neighbours, were pouring out their blood like water at the

altar of liberty, and were perfecting their political, civil and municipal institutions, our ancestors, the representatives of the elder branch of the Aryan race, disregarding the paltry affairs of time, betook themselves to the study of philosophy and religion, and

“ ————— reasoned high,  
Of Providence, fore-knowledge, will and fate ;  
Fix'd fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute.”

That such was the character of the ancient Hindu mind, is evident from the voluminous mass of Sanscrit literature. Max Müller, perhaps the deepest Sanscrit scholar of the day, speaking of this very subject, in his “*History of Ancient Sanscrit Literature*,” writes as follows ;—“ The Indian never knew the feeling of nationality, and his heart never trembled in the expectation of national applause. There were no heroes to inspire a poet,—no history to call forth a historian. The only sphere where the Indian mind found itself at liberty to act, to create and to worship, was the sphere of religion and philosophy ; and nowhere have religious and metaphysical ideas struck root so deep in the mind of a nation as in India. The Hindus were a nation of philosophers. Their struggles were the struggles of thought ; their past, the problem of creation ; their future, the problem

of existence. The present alone, which is the real and living solution of the problems of the past and the future, seems never to have attracted their thoughts or to have called out their energies.\*

Yes, gentlemen, your ancestors were philosophers ; they preferred philosophy and religion to politics and mechanics ; and though, under the teaching of our junior brethren—I mean our sturdy Anglo-Saxon conquerors—we have learnt to pay greater regard to the present than our philosophical forefathers did, I trust we have lost none of their contemplative and religious spirit. “A Hindu,” as I have remarked elsewhere,† “is the most religious being in existence. He gets up from his bed religiously, anoints his body religiously, washes religiously, dresses religiously, sits religiously, stands religiously, eats religiously, drinks religiously, sleeps religiously, learns religiously, remains ignorant religiously, and becomes irreligious religiously.” It is this religiousness, forming so prominent a part of the Hindu character, and called into activity by the combined influence of English education and Christian Missions, which has created that spirit of religious enquiry

\* Max Muller's *History of Ancient Sanscrit Literature* ; 2nd Ed. p. 31.    † *Calcutta Review*.

over which I am now rejoicing. Cherish, friends and countrymen, this spirit of religious enquiry. Religion is by far the most important of man's concerns; it is the "one thing needful"—it is the "pearl of great price." Without it the mightiest monarch in the world is poor; with it a street-beggar is more fortunate than a Cræsus.

Some of you, perhaps the great majority of you, have not yet made up your minds on the subject of religion. You have been convinced of the falsehood of Hinduism, but you don't know yet what system of religious faith to believe in. You are enquiring into the subject. Go on enquiring in a proper spirit. Pursue after truth in a meek, docile, humble, candid, earnest, serious and prayerful spirit, and the God of Truth will give you light.

There may be others present in this hall, who are convinced of the Divine origin of Christianity, but who do not embrace it and make a profession of it, from prudential considerations. The fear of reproach and contumely, affection for parents or other relatives, and the love of the world, keep them back. They intend, they say, to act out their religious convictions at a more convenient season. Let such bear with me for a moment, while I, in passing, address to

them a word of exhortation. Friends, do not stifle your convictions. Do not resist the motions of the good Spirit in you. Honestly practise what you profess. Manfully avow your convictions, and act according to them. Acquit yourselves like men. Want of harmony between profession and practice must produce great cowardliness of character. Besides, you do not know that a more convenient season will ever come to you. The present only is in your possession; over the future you have no command. Take the advice of the Poet,—

"Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!  
Let the dead Past bury its dead!  
Act—act in the living Present!  
Hoart within and God o'erhead."

There are others present in this hall, who profess to have made up their minds on the subject of religion, and call themselves Bráhmas. My business this night is chiefly with those gentlemen.

I don't know how, but somehow or other, of late I have been represented by parties as an enemy of the Bráhmas. God forbid, gentlemen, that I should be the enemy of any man or any number of men. I am no enemy of the Bráhmas. I look upon myself as a friend of the Bráhmas. Indeed, if I were not a friend of

the Bráhmas, I should not be this night where I now stand. It is because I am a friend of the Bráhmas, it is because I love the Bráhmas, that I endeavour, in my own humble and feeble way, to do them good. It is true I have sometimes found fault with Bráhmas, and oftener with their system of religion. But I declare solemnly, that my motive in doing so has ever been to do some good to my Bráhma friends. And if in public I have more frequently spoken, either through the press or from the platform, of Bráhmas than of others of my countrymen, it is simply because my heart has been drawn towards them more than to others. Let the Bráhmas then not look upon me as their enemy. I count some Bráhmas as amongst my friends. I respect and honour those Bráhmas, because I think them sincere, though I at the same time think that they are mistaken in their religious belief. Indeed, I have respect for the whole body of sincere Bráhmas, though I confess I have no respect for those insincere and hypocritical Bráhmas who, though they are most regular in their attendance at the Samáj every Wednesday evening, loudest in their chanting of prayers, and most methodical in performing the oscillatory movements of the head, belie their professions, and countenance all the debas-

ing rites of idolatry. I say I have respect for all sincere Bráhmas, because they have directed their minds to the subject of religion. I respect them, because they do not throw the concern of religion into the background, as some of our countrymen do. I respect them, because they protest against idolatry. It is a move in the right direction. And I pray that God may overrule the movement for good to our country.

And here, before going any further, I venture to give a bit of salutary advice to my Bráhma friends. Don't speak boastfully of your system of religion. Give up vapouring. Your system of religion—if I must call it a system—was got up only the other year; and ever since it has been constantly mended. It has not yet been tested sufficiently to assure one that it will stand for some time. A great and good man, one of the best friends India ever had, in the exuberance of his kindness, said of the Bráhma Samáj that it was a “power.” This expression has, it seems, turned the heads of many of the younger members of the Samáj. Soon after the expression, just mentioned, was seen in print, a good deal of vapouring was heard. The expression was improved, and Bráhmaism was declared a mighty power in the empire. It was

said that the days of Christianity were numbered, that Bráhmaism was about to commence its religious conquest of the world, and that it was to establish itself on the ruins of Christianity. Bráhmaism is to establish itself on the ruins of Christianity ! The statement is so ludicrous that one cannot help smiling. A religion which has braved the battle and the ~~breeze~~ for two thousand years, which successfully repelled the attacks of Grecian philosophy, which stood unmoved amid the shock of Rome's imperial authority, which remained unscathed through the fires of innumerable persecutions, and which has baffled the insidious efforts of hosts of lettered infidels of modern times—such a religion is to be destroyed by whom, by what ?—by a system of religious opinions manufactured only the other day in Bengal, and ever since every day so tinkered that the original can hardly be recognized in the amended product ! The thing is ridiculous. If the great and good man, who has called the Bráhma Samáj a “ power,” had foreseen, at the moment of writing, what boastful declamation that expression would give birth to, he would not, indeed, have erased the word after it had flowed from his pen, but he would have somewhat modified it and said—the Bráhma Samáj is a “ power”—“ ay, not unlike

in value the negative *power* of an algebraic quantity."

I do not purpose this evening to discuss the whole subject of Bráhmaism. I do not wish this evening to examine the Bráhma dogmas of the non-necessity of a written revelation, and of the capacity of intuition to give us all the requisite knowledge of God and of our salvation. Enough has been said on these topics, at other times and in other places, to satisfy every candid person that those dogmas are erroneous.

I purpose at this time to enquire whether the theory propounded in Bráhmaism of our reconciliation to God, and the means of procuring salvation, is the right one. The great problem of religion is—"Given the disordered state of man, to find a restorative"—"given the diseased state of humanity, to find a remedy." Bráhmaism acknowledges that this is the problem which requires solution. How, then, does Bráhmaism solve the problem? What, in other words, is the Bráhma theory of Atonement? In answering this question I shall, as much as possible, use the words of a Bráhma tract, the 13th number of the English series, which is specially devoted to the discussion of this subject.

"Atonement, scientifically considered," says the Bráhma tract just alluded to, "is nothing

nore than a return to God. The word *atone* simply means to be *at one* with God—to be reconciled to Him." [I may be permitted, gentlemen, to remark, by the way, that though atonement or *at-one-ment*, signifies etymologically, and perhaps also as used in the English translation of the New Testament, reconciliation or the bringing into one of parties before at variance; yet the word, in Christian theology, means not so much reconciliation, as that which brings about reconciliation. Theologically, reconciliation is not atonement, it is the *fruit* of atonement. Atonement, or atonement-money of the Old Testament, is the price given, whether in the way of recompense or suffering, for the healing of a breach. But to proceed.] "By the commission of sin," says the Bráhma tract, "we turn astray from Him, we cease to enjoy His company. By atonement we renounce our sin, again draw near to Him, and enjoy the blessings of His company. Hence the turning back to God is the whole philosophy of atonement. Hence our belief that 'repentance is atonement,' because repentance is the indispensable means of turning away from iniquity and returning to God." "Our God" "is absolute love. His is not the finite, phenomenal love of humanity, but everlasting and abiding love,

immutable as His nature....He loveth us always. He changeth not, though we change ; our virtues and vices do not modify His nature. ...The whole change which sin brings on is in ourselves, not in Him ; so likewise the change consequent on atonement. Our sin does not stir His vengeance ; our entreaties do not dissuade Him from His uniform purpose.... Divine forgiveness, far from being, like human forgiveness, cessation of resentment, is simply a restoration of the sinner to the blessings of divine love. Thus the mere fact of eschewing sin and purifying the heart constitutes atonement." "The God of love," observes the Bráhma tract-writer, "punishes us not for punishment's sake, not for vengeance sake, but because *He loves us and desires our welfare.*" Such punishment "acts like the unpalatable drug, painful in its immediate effects, but beneficial in the end. God punishes sinners for their good, *all His inflictions are remedial and salutary.*" "Behold," exclaims the Bráhma writer, "behold the harmony between divine justice and goodness. Justice demands that the iniquitous should be visited with adequate punishment, goodness demands that their welfare should be promoted. Punishment is inflicted—justice is satisfied : amendment is sought—goodness is

satisfied. Thus in the act of punishment justice and mercy, instead of running counter to each other, most beautifully harmonize." With regard to salvation, the same writer remarks, that if salvation "means deliverance from punishment, salvation is impossible, for the connection of sin with punishment is necessary. Nor is such deliverance desirable, if punishment is the means of amendment. But salvation, true salvation, denotes simply deliverance from sin.....When the sinner thinks of punishment, he trembles and quails and feels his lot hard beyond compare; but when once he looks to the merciful arm that administers the punishment, he finds consolation and relief. When he sees the cup, he weeps; he rejoices, when he sees that a Father fills the cup."

Now, gentlemen, I hope to prove to your satisfaction that the Bráhma theory of atonement, an account of which I have thus given you in the words of an authoritative exposition of the doctrine, is one mass of misconceptions.

1. I remark, in the first place, that the Bráhma theory of atonement is founded on an erroneous view of the Holiness of God.

It is plain from the extracts which I have already read to you this evening from a Bráhma

tract, that Bráhmaism represents God as incapable of being displeased with a sinner. Let the sinner violate all His commandments—let him besmear himself with the filth of uncleanness—let him offer divine homage to stocks and stones—let him imbrue his hands in the blood of his fellowmen: the holy and just God, the righteous Ruler of the universe looks upon him with the same regard as before. Let the sinner do what he pleases—let him prostitute the noble powers, with which God has endowed him, to the vilest of purposes—let him revel in iniquity—let him affront the Divine Majesty—let him blaspheme His Holy Name—let him do all this: “the eternal and immutable ~~Now~~ of absolute love” is not displeased, is not offended, but looks upon the ungodly wretch, as if he were a dutiful child. This is the dogma of the Bráhmas, and it is a dogma which is the corner-stone of the edifice of the Bráhma atonement.

Let me ask you, gentlemen, whether your consciences respond to this portraiture of the Deity? I appeal to you whether your consciences do not tell you that, when you commit sin, you provoke the Divine displeasure. Gloss it over as they may, the Bráhma idea of God is virtually the Epicurean idea, by which the Deity was represented as abstracted from the

affairs of the world, and feeling no concern in the obedience or disobedience which His creatures rendered to Him. As a Christian I believe—and I rejoice in believing it—that God is infinitely merciful, and that He is love itself. And when Bráhmas and others speak of God as Love, they but borrow the idea from the Christian Scriptures—for there is nothing in Creation, or in the depths of intuition either, which could generate the notion that God was Absolute Love: on the contrary, the testimonies of Nature and conscience go the other way, and show that God is a consuming fire. I say, I rejoice in believing that God is infinitely merciful, that He is Love; but I also believe that every sinner is the object of the Divine displeasure, that God is angry with the wicked every day, and that the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

That a sinner is the object of the Divine displeasure, seems to be the voice of reason. Let me read to you a passage on this subject from the writings of the celebrated Adam Smith—the friend, companion and admirer of David Hume, and one who certainly will not be suspected of attachment to the peculiar doctrines of Christianity:—

"But if it be meant," says Adam Smith, "that vice does not appear to the Deity to be, for its own sake, the object of abhorrence and aversion, and what, for its own sake, it is fit and right should be punished, the truth of this maxim can, by no means, be so easily admitted. If we consult our natural sentiments, we are apt to fear, lest, before the holiness of God, vice should appear more worthy of punishment, than the weakness and imperfection of human nature can ever seem to be of reward. Man, when about to appear before a Being of infinite perfection, can feel but little confidence in his own merit, or in the imperfect propriety of his own conduct. In the presence of his fellow-creatures he may often justly elevate himself, and may often have reason to think highly of his own character and conduct, compared to the still greater imperfection of theirs. But the case is quite different, when about to appear before his infinite Creator. To such a Being, he can scarce imagine that his littleness and weakness should ever seem to be the proper object either of esteem or of reward. But he can easily conceive, how the numberless violations of duty, of which he has been guilty, should render him the object of *aversion* and *punishment*; neither can he see any reason why the *Divine indigna-*

*tion* should not be let loose, without any restraint, upon so vile an insect as he is sensible that he himself must appear to be."

This voice of the natural sentiments, so well interpreted by Adam Smith, is confirmed by the consentient voice of man in every age of the world. If we look to the practices of the heathen world, we shall find that almost the entire of the religion of pagan nations consisted, and still consist, of "rites of deprecation." It has been justly observed, that "the fear of the Divine displeasure seems to have been the leading feature in their religious impressions; and in the diversity, the costliness, and the cruelty of their sacrifices, they sought to appease gods, to whose wrath they felt themselves exposed, from a consciousness of sin, unrelieved by any information as to the means of escaping its effects." Is this fact, I ask, not borne out by the representations of the Deity given by pagan nations?—for instance, the frightful image of Kali, with her collars of human skulls and dismembered limbs, the appendages of mutilated corpses, and all the other circumstances of horror which distinguish that sable goddess? Is it not borne out by the cruel modes of worship to which idolatrous nations have recourse?—for instance, the terrible penances, the severe

austerities, and the barbarous self-lacerations of the Hindu Yogi? Is it not borne out, in fine, by the prevalence of human sacrifices throughout the Gentile world? I abominate those human sacrifices—I detest those inhuman modes of worship—I abhor those representations of the Deity; but the language those sacrifices, those modes of worship, and those representations of the Deity utter, is instructive. They show that it is the general sense of humanity, that a sinner is an object of the Divine displeasure.

Let none suppose that, when we say that a sinner is an object of the Divine displeasure, we ascribe human passions to God. We do not hold, as it has been represented that we do, the “revolting dogma of anthropomorphism which imputes to the Deity the passions and infirmities of the flesh.” No. “The *anger, wrath, and displeasure* of God,” in the language of a Christian theologian, “are not passions or affections of the Divine nature, resembling those which receive the same names in man. They are terms denoting the necessary opposition of the Divine rectitude to such as have violated the holy law of the righteous Lord who loveth righteousness. They mark the relation into which iniquity brings such as are chargeable

with it, to the Law-giver and Judge of the universe. It is the language of *government*, not of *passion*." Yes, gentlemen, owing to the very nature of God, a sinner cannot but be the object of the Divine displeasure. God is holy—essentially, necessarily, eternally and absolutely holy. He is not only free from every vestige of moral pollution; He not only delights in whatever is pure; but He hates with a perfect hatred whatever is of an opposite character. Now, sin is opposed to the holiness of God; it is essentially impure and abominable. It is therefore the object of His supreme detestation. He hates sin universally, intensely and necessarily. He abhors it so that His hatred redounds upon the person that commits it. The primary object of His displeasure is *sin*; He is not displeased with the nature of man *as man*, for that was derived from Him, but He is displeased with the nature of man as sinful, which is from the sinner himself.\*

The basis of the Bráhma theory of atonement is the dogma that a sinner is not the object of the Divine displeasure. That dogma, I have just shown you, by a variety of reasons, to be untenable, therefore the Bráhma theory of

\*

\* Charnock on *The Attributes*.

atonement becomes baseless as the fabric of a vision.

2.—In the second place the Bráhma theory of atonement is founded on an erroneous idea of Punishment in the Divine government.

God has established a moral government over His rational creatures. As long as there is a rational creature in the universe, so long is that rational creature subject to the Creator; and the Creator cannot part with His right to govern that rational creature. God is therefore the moral Governor of the universe, and all rational creatures are His subjects. But there cannot be government without laws; and there cannot be moral subjects without penal laws, as the measure of the subjection and obedience of those subjects. Where the creature is capable of transgressing—and all rational creatures are capable of transgressing—there must be laws to which penalties are attached. For unless penalties were attached to laws, laws would be no laws—they would be mere counsels. Unless penalties were attached to laws, transgressors would slip out entirely from the dominion of God—they would virtually cease to be His subjects, and God Himself would naturally lose His right of sovereignty. And if there be penal laws, those laws must be executed, other-

wise the penalty attached to them would be an empty threat, and the Divine government itself would become a solemn mockery.\* Forth steps the spruce Bráhma philosopher and asks,— “Why all this parade of common-place reasoning? Who does not admit these truisms?” Wait a bit, my friend. What is the Bráhma idea of punishment? “The punishment of sin,” says the Bráhma tract from which I have already quoted, “the punishment of sin is not, as some suppose, a penalty arbitrarily or artificially connected with sin, but is its natural and necessary consequence. .... It follows sin in just the same way as an effect follows a cause..... Sin potentially involves its own punishment, ‘as the acorn contains the oak.’”

It thus appears that, according to Bráhma, the only possible punishment of sin is that which naturally flows from it, and is potentially involved in it—or, in other words, remorse of conscience. It is said of virtue, that “it is its own reward,” so according to Bráhma, sin is its own punishment, and is susceptible of no other punishment.

That God has so organized the moral constitution of man, that virtuous emotions and virtuous actions fill the mind with complacency,

\* John Howe's *Living Temple*.

and that vicious emotions and vicious actions produce remorse, I admit; and I admit also that this remorse of conscience will form one of the chief ingredients of that cup of misery which shall be the portion of the impenitent in the coming life. But this surely is not *all* the punishment which may be inflicted upon sin. God surely can annex to sin other punishments than that which naturally flows from it,—not indeed by arbitrary appointment, not by mere whim or caprice, but according to the dictates of infinite wisdom and the requirements of the Divine government. Divine government requires other punishments than remorse of conscience to be annexed to sin. Fancy, gentlemen, the Governor-General of India in Council abolishing fines; abolishing flogging; breaking down all jails, and taking down the gallows; and making a proclamation to the effect that henceforth no criminal will be either fined, flogged, imprisoned, or hanged, but every malefactor will be left to the stings of his own upbraiding conscience! Such an act, and such a proclamation, would no doubt be very grateful—I say not to Bráhma—but to thieves and criminals of every dye; but how would they subserve the purposes of government? I leave the application to be made by yourselves.

It is true that here below, in the Divine government, we for the most part see vice punished naturally; but that is no reason why it should not be visited with additional punishment hereafter. Indeed, on an observation of the imperfect manner in which virtue is rewarded and vice punished here below, is based one of the strongest arguments in favour of a future state of existence, where virtue will meet with its due reward and vice or sin its adequate punishment: but how futile would that argument be, if we supposed that, in the future life, virtuous men will have no other reward than the approbation of their own hearts, and vicious men no other punishment than the pangs of their own conscience?

Further, I appeal to your consciousness, whether the remorse of conscience, which follows the commission of sin, is not always associated with the idea of punishment other than the enhancement of that remorse—whether it is not accompanied with a fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation? And I have already shown you, when expatiating on the Divine displeasure against sin, that that has been the experience of men in all ages of the world.

But this is not the whole of the Bráhma idea of punishment. According to Bráhmaism—and the Bráhma theory of atonement requires it—all punishment inflicted by God is remedial, in fact the very object of punishment is the salvation of the sinner. You might as well say, that all death is life-giving, and the very object of death is life. This extraordinary dogma of the Bráhmas is to be traced to their one-sided view of God. They always speak of God as a merciful Father, but seldom as a righteous Ruler. Were God nothing more than the great Father of the human family, the remedial character of punishment, or rather chastisement, might be admitted; for in that case there would be no punishment at all, in the proper sense of the word. But God is also the moral Governor of the human race. He is a just God and a righteous Ruler. He has to satisfy His justice, when it is violated; He has to vindicate the honour of His laws, when they are transgressed; He has to maintain the dignity of His government, when it is tampered with. It is for this purpose that He has established penal laws in His kingdom: and to say that the object of these penal laws is the salvation of those that violate them, is to talk nonsense. You might with equal propriety say, that the object of

capital punishment in a state is to save the life of the criminal. As a Father, God undoubtedly chastises those of His children who have been reconciled to Him; but as a righteous Judge, as a just Ruler, He inflicts punishment upon the disobedient and the impenitent. But chastisement is one thing, and punishment quite another. The Bráhma confounds the two, or rather he believes in chastisement, but ignores punishment. Properly speaking, in his theological vocabulary there is no such word as punishment. The proper end of chastisement is the reformation of the person chastised; the proper end of punishment is the satisfaction of justice and the vindication of violated law.

3. The Bráhma theory of atonement is founded on an erroneous idea of the justice of God.

I need not dwell at large on this point, as the observations I have already made under the two preceding heads amply bear me out in the statement. The Bráhmas do certainly talk of the justice of God, but I fear, what Archbishop Magee said of Dr. Priestley's idea of Divine justice, is applicable to the Bráhma idea of justice, viz., that it is "but a sound made use of to save appearances." In the Bráhma theory of atonement is ignored what has been called

the distributive justice of God, which consists in giving every one his due, treating all according to their desert, acting towards the subjects of law according to the terms of law. This requires that sin be punished according to its desert. The evil of sin is infinite. It must therefore receive an infinite punishment— infinite either in nature or in duration. A punishment which is infinite in nature cannot be borne by a finite creature; punishment infinite in duration is exclusive of all possible pardon; whence it follows that if sin is to be punished agreeably to its desert, and yet sinners saved, it must meet this punishment in the person of one who can sustain an infliction which is infinite in nature. Brâhmaism speaks of no such provision. Christianity does.

Brâhmaism ignores the retributive justice of God, which is that opposition of the Divine nature to sin which leads to the annexation of penalty to the breach of His law. The opposition of God's law to sin is just the opposition of His nature to sin; for God's nature, and not merely God's will, is the ultimate source of morality. The determination of God to punish sin is not voluntary, far less arbitrary, but necessary. He annexes punishment to sin, not because He wills to do so, but because His nature

requires it.\* How this retributive justice is ignored by Bráhmas, you have already seen from their idea of punishment.

4. The Bráhma theory of atonement is false, because it sets out with a partial view of the sinful condition of man.

In medicine, if the character of a disease has not been correctly ascertained, the proper remedy cannot be prescribed. Bráhmaism has not understood the full extent of the disease with which humanity has been afflicted ; no wonder therefore that the remedy it proposes does not reach the case. What, according to Bráhmaism, is man's disorder ? It consists only in this, that man's soul is corrupt, or in other words, that man is under the *power* of sin. Accordingly, Bráhmaism prescribes repentance as the only remedy for the disease. But is that the whole disorder of man ? Is not man groaning under the *guilt* of sin ? Is he not conscious of having offended the Deity by violating His laws ? This Bráhmaism ignores. Bráhmaism acknowledges that man is internally corrupt, but it admits not that sinful man is an object of the Divine displeasure—it admits not that the sword of Divine justice, like the sword of Damocles, is hanging over his head ready to

\* Symington on *The Atonement*.

fall—it admits not that man has rendered himself an heir of perdition. That this is also a part of man's disorder, your consciences will testify, as well as the groans of humanity uttered through the deprecatory rites of superstition. Bráhmaism does not understand the whole disease of man; the remedy, therefore, which it proposes can be of no use to us. The best that can be said of it is, that it does not suit our case.

5. The Bráhma theory of atonement is useless, since the remedy which it proposes for removing the disorders of humanity is impracticable and inefficacious. We have just seen that Bráhmaism does not understand the whole disease of man; but the remedy which it prescribes for that part of the disease which it understands is of no worth. My spiritual constitution is in a state of disorganization. Naturally I love sin and abhor holiness, I have no relish for spiritual things. I am prone to do that which is evil, I am backward from doing that which is good. I am wallowing in the mire and filth of sin. Bráhmaism finds me in this state. What advice does it give me for my recovery? It says "repent,"—that is, change your mind, leave off your sins, and turn to God and holiness. Brave advice! But how

am I to follow that advice ? I have no power to follow it—I have no inclination to follow it. How is the power to be given to me ? How is the taste to be created in me ? Suppose I am fallen into a deep ditch. My feet are sinking into the puddle. I find nothing to lay hold of and raise myself up by. I cry for help. Bráhmaism passes by, looks at me from above, and without stretching out a helping hand to lift me up, simply says, “ Brother, you are in a truly helpless condition. Raise yourself up.” Thou fool ! I might well answer, if I could raise myself, why should I cry for help ? Suppose for a moment that “ repentance is atonement,” as the Bráhma has it. Of what use is that doctrine to me ? It would be of use, if I could repent by my own power. But I have clearly not that power. My whole moral nature is diseased. I have neither the will nor the power to reform ; for true repentance is nothing less. Would it not be mockery to tell me in my condition that I should repent, when I have not the power to repent ? This reminds me of what a physician said to a patient labouring under an acute disease, and who went to him for help—“ You will be all right, when you are well again.”

What I have said just now refers to Bráhma repentance in this life. But according to the Bráhma, there is repentance too in the life to come. After death I shall have to suffer for my sins. And after I have suffered adequately for all my sins, I shall turn to God. But the question is, how will my turning to God be brought about? How will punishment lead me to repentance? Have I not reason to fear that punishment will harden me more and more? Have I not reason to fear that, after being subjected to punishment for a long time, I shall have a greater distaste for God and for holiness than ever? Is there not reason to fear that after I have undergone the full tale of my sufferings, I shall become a hardened wretch, reckless of all consequences?

6. Sixthly and lastly, the Bráhma theory of atonement is of no use to me, because it does not give me what I want. What I want is the salvation of my soul. Suppose for a moment that salvation consists only, as the Bráhma asserts, in freedom from sin, and not also in the remission of sin. Even this half-salvation, as I may call it, Bráhmaism does not give me as readily as I want. I want salvation immediately, or, at any rate, immediately after my death. It is not in the power of Bráhmaism to

supply that want so soon. I am told that after my death I shall have to suffer for all my sins, and to suffer adequately, and after that I shall have salvation. My sins must be suffered for, before I can obtain salvation: what good then does Bráhmaism do to me? If I must suffer for my sins—if my sins must have their natural course—if punishment cannot be averted by Bráhmaism, of what earthly use is Bráhmaism to me? I may as well go without it. I am suffering from a raging fever. My strength is dried up in me, and I am likely to die. I call a doctor. He examines me and coolly says, “The disease must run its course, you may be well afterwards.” Famous doctor! Such is Bráhmaism. Or, to vary the figure, Bráhmaism is like those dishonest debtors who always put off their creditors by the talismanic word—“to-morrow.” When that “to-morrow” will come no one knows, perhaps in the Greek Kalends.

I am further told that I may have to suffer for my sins for “endless ages.” There is now some light dawning on the subject! I may have to suffer for endless ages! Then, when will there be salvation for me? My needs are urgent, I want a present salvation, and Bráhmaism puts me off till “endless ages.”

O ! my Bráhma friends, you may wait, if you like, for this distant salvation ; I cannot, for my wants are pressing. You may win the brave country for yourselves ; as for me, I must go some other way for my salvation.

But enough, gentlemen. I trust I have shown to you that the Bráhma attempt to solve the great problem in religion is a miserable failure. Bráhmaism has wrong views of the holiness of God, wrong views of punishment in the Divine government, wrong views of the justice of God, wrong views of the state and condition of man, and therefore wrong views of reconciliation. Bráhmaism understands not the disease of man, therefore its prescription for human recovery is useless ; and the prospect which, by its own showing, it holds out of recovery, is so distant that it becomes quite viewless. And yet, after such a failure, the expositor of the Bráhma doctrine breaks out into the following triumphant exclamation—"Behold the harmony between Divine justice and goodness ! Justice demands that the iniquitous should be visited with adequate punishment : goodness demands that their welfare should be promoted. Punishment is inflicted—justice is satisfied : amendment is sought—goodness is satisfied." May I not, gentlemen, with better reason and

greater propriety, say—"Behold, in the Bráhma theory of atonement, the discord between Divine justice and Divine mercy ! Justice demands that the iniquitous should be visited with adequate punishment, or satisfaction rendered to it on their behalf by some one able to do it : mercy demands that their welfare should be promoted. Punishment has *not* been inflicted, for punishment has been ignored, therefore justice has *not* been satisfied, and its avenging sword is suspended in mid air ready to fall ; amendment is *not* sought after, for the iniquitous have neither the ability nor the inclination to seek after it, and there is no provision made for the infusion of Divine grace ; therefore mercy has no room for exercise."

Gentlemen, I wish I could now show you how the great problem of religion is solved in Christianity. I wish I could now show you, the members of the Bráhma Samáj especially, what deep philosophy there is in the plan of salvation chalked out in Christianity,—how gloriously it illustrates and magnifies the attributes of God, and how beautifully adapted it is to the state and wants of man. I wish I could show you at some length how the second Person of the adorable Trinity satisfied, on the behalf of man, the Divine justice, by Himself suffering the

punishment due to man's sins ; how He magnified and made honourable the law of God by rendering to it, on the behalf of man, ~~a~~ perfect obedience ; how the obstructions to the full flow of the Divine mercy were removed by Him ; how justice and mercy have met together in the Christian system, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other ; and what admirable provision there is made for the purification of human nature by the inward operation of the mighty Spirit of God. But there is no time now for doing all this. Let me entreat you to study this subject in the writings of Christian theologians. For myself, the more I study the subject, the more am I struck with its surpassing beauty and sublimity. It is beautifully adapted to the state of man ; it supplies all his wants. Man has broken God's law. He is therefore an object of the Divine displeasure. He is naturally a child of wrath—an heir of perdition. He deserves to be miserable for ever. But Christ has expiated his sins. Divine justice has therefore been satisfied, and mercy has therefore full scope. Man is justified, his sins are forgiven, he is adopted into the family of God. He becomes an heir of glory. Man's nature is depraved, his heart corrupt and his affections unholy. Christ sends him the Holy

Spirit. Man's heart becomes changed, his will renewed, his conscience quickened, his affections sanctified. Thus man is restored to God and to holiness.

O, my Bráhma friends, if you felt what a bitter thing it is to sin against God—if you felt what a malignant thing sin is, you would not say that a sinner cannot be an object of the Divine displeasure. If you had a real and deep conviction of sin, you would not think it was in your power to repent. If you felt that you were an undone sinner, you would not believe in any man-made theories of atonement,—you would run to Christ and Him alone. The first step in practical religion is self-humiliation, self-abhorrence. A man that is truly humble can never think that his repentance can ever save him. His repentance needs to be repented of again. Listen to the words of a man whose soul was deeply exercised in religion. “I know,” says he, “that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.” And so overwhelming was his sense of his sinfulness that he cried out in intense agony and exclaimed—“O wretched man that I am !

who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Yes, my Bráhma friends, we must have an adequate sense of our own wretchedness, before we can obtain true peace. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." When we feel that we are sinful, then, but not till then, do we feel the necessity of a Saviour. Endeavour, then, to realise the sinfulness of your nature; and you will realise it when you descend into the depths of your own nature, and compare the state of your heart with the requirements of the Divine law. And when you do realise your sinfulness, you will not then find consolation in mere human theories of atonement—you will then flee to Him who is the only Refuge of souls—to Him who is the Prince of Peace—to Him "*who gave Himself for us, that He might sanctify and cleanse us with the washing of water by the word, that He might present us to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that we should be holy and without blemish.*" Amen.

## LECTURE IV.\*

---

### FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

The subject of this evening's Lecture is, as you are aware, the defectiveness of that system of religious opinions, if system it can be called, to which its advocates have given the name of Bráhmaism. The chief doctrines of that system are as follows:—That there is but one God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, who is infinite, eternal, immutable, omnipotent, omniscient, essentially holy and immeasurably merciful; that that God is to be worshipped; that there is a future state of existence, in which virtue will be rewarded and vice punished; and that repentance is sufficient atonement of sin. I shall have to consider some of these doctrines in detail, in the course of the present discussion; but at the outset I cannot help congratulating my educated countrymen, and especially the Bráhmas, on the progress they

\* Delivered at the Free Church Institution, on the 13th of April, 1866.

have already made in religious enquiry. To every well-wisher of India, and therefore to every patriotic Indian, it must be a matter of no little satisfaction, that there is a considerable proportion of the educated youth of Calcutta, who have not only no belief in their national superstitions, but who have adopted a form of faith which, however defective in other respects, is far purer and more rational than those gross and absurd ideas of religion which were entertained by our ancestors, and which are still entertained by most of our countrymen. There is a wide gulf between belief in a plurality of gods and the practice of idolatry, on the one hand, and a faith in, and worship of, one God, on the other ; and that gulf has been successfully crossed by our Brâhma friends. The deistical congregation that meets for worship every Wednesday evening, at Jorasanko, is a phenomenon as interesting as it is singular. It is *singular*, for I am not aware that there is, at this moment, in any other country than India, a congregation of deists meeting together periodically for purposes of devotion ; and it is *interesting*, for it must be acknowledged to be so far a refreshing spectacle to witness an assembly of young monotheists, among a nation of idolaters, engaged in adoring the Infinite Spirit, chaunting the grand old

hymns of the Vedas, and exhorting one another to love and to good works.

I value Bráhmaism for three reasons. I value it, *in the first place*, as a protest against idolatry which is the crying sin of our nation. Now, whatever defects Bráhmas may have, it must be acknowledged in fairness that they are not mere speculative monotheists. They have energetically protested against idolatry, and are endeavouring honestly, I believe, to rescue their countrymen from its irrational and degrading practice. I speak not of those inconsistent Bráhmas—and there are inconsistent men among votaries of every system of religion—I speak not of those inconsistent Bráhmas, who worship one God in the Samáj building, and pay Divine homage to idols in their own houses; but it must be admitted that the Bráhmas as a body protest against and disown idolatry. I value Bráhmaism, *in the second place*, as an instrument of social reform in our country. In this department, Bráhmaism has not certainly as yet effected much; but it has made a fair start. It has begun to emancipate Hindu women from the thraldom of ignorance and tyrant custom; and it is undermining that huge system of caste, which presents the greatest barrier to all improvement in our country. Lastly, I value

Bráhmaism as an index of that spirit of religious enquiry which has begun to manifest itself in some of our educated countrymen. Nothing can be more dreary, more cheerless, than utter indifference to all religious enquiry ; and as life is to be greatly preferred to death, though that life should manifest itself in a mischievous manner, a spirit of religious enquiry which should temporarily issue in the adoption of even an imperfect form of faith is, in my opinion, better than that hopeless apathy in religion which characterises so many of our educated countrymen.

Having thus expressed my sense of the value of Bráhmaism, I feel bound to declare that it is a very defective system of religion, that it is not adapted to the condition of man, that it is incapable of giving everlasting happiness to its votaries, and that, therefore, as a system of religion, it is of no use. With a view to establish this position, I shall shew *firstly*, that Bráhmaism is baseless ; *secondly*, that it is uncertain ; *thirdly*, that it is unauthoritative ; *fourthly*, that it does not discover the means of obtaining pardon of sin ; *fifthly*, that it devises no plan for the purification of the human soul ; and *sixthly* and lastly, that it does not furnish sufficient motives for the pursuit of a holy life.

And I pray God, who is the Source of all light and the guide of our intellects, that, while I prosecute this enquiry, He may be graciously pleased to give to my hearers, especially to those Bráhmias who may now be listening to me, that spirit of candour and love of truth, without which all religious discussion must be fruitless.\*

1. My first point, then, is that Bráhmaism is baseless—it has no stable ground on which to rest. All the religious systems of the world are founded on revelation, whether real or pretended. But the Bráhmáas deny the fact, necessity and possibility of a Divine revelation. It becomes then a natural question—how came the Bráhmáas by their doctrines? On the first establishment of the Bráhma Samáj and some years later, we were told that those doctrines were derived from the Vedas, which were believed to have been divinely inspired. In course of time, however, when it was shown that the theology of the Vedas was essentially pantheistic, and that those books, venerable though they are on account of their antiquity, could not have been divinely inspired, the Bráhmáas discarded all belief in the Vedas, and maintained that they derived the doctrines of their religion from a contemplation of the works of Nature and the light of reason. This ground they have also

rejected ; and they now maintain that the doctrines of Bráhmaism are self-evident or first truths, and that they are “written in the depths of the soul in imperishable characters”—thus pointing to intuition as the source of all the doctrines of Bráhmaism.

Now, what are intuitive or first truths ? They are necessary, universal truths. We believe them because we can't help believing them, from the very constitution of our minds. Every one believes them as soon as they are stated, without requiring to go through a process of reasoning. Are the doctrines of Bráhmaism truths of this description ? Are they fixed in the soul of man as fundamental truths ? Are they “written in the depths of the soul in imperishable characters ?” Are they necessary and universal truths ?

It is rather a curious fact that the primitive Bráhmas, and their immediate successors, did not know that the basis of their faith was intuitive. They had all their theology “written in the depths of their souls in imperishable characters ;” but somehow they did not know it. Whether it was that those imperishable characters had become illegible by the incrustation of ignorance and prejudice, or that there was no light in their intellectual eye-sight, certain it is that Rám Mohan Roy and Rám Chandra

Vidyábágis'a and Akshaya Kumár Datta, and Bábu Debendra Náth Tagore, during the first years of his presidency over the Bráhma Samáj, never could read those characters ; they never even expected that there were any characters at all in their "heart of hearts." Poor Rám Mohan Roy ! how blind must thou have been ! Thou wast carrying in the depths of thine own soul all the doctrines of Bráhmaism, written in imperishable characters, and yet thou couldest not read them ; thou couldst not even suspect their existence, but hadst recourse to the Vedas, and to the works of Nature, and to the light of reason, for deriving those doctrines—while all the time they were in thee. Verily, thy soul was shrouded in Cimmerian darkness !

If the doctrines of Bráhmaism are intuitive fundamental truths ; if they are written in imperishable characters in the depths of the human soul, they must be universally admitted truths. Let the history of the religions of the world show whether those doctrines have been universally held. If it be a self-evident, intuitive, axiomatic, universally admitted truth, that there is but one God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, who is infinite, eternal, immutable, omnipotent, omniscient, essentially holy, and immeasurably merciful,—then why do the na-

tions believe in a plurality of deities, and, among others, our own countrymen in 330 millions of gods? why do they ascribe unworthy qualities and passions to those gods? And how is it that the idea of creation, properly so called, never entered into the mind of any ancient philosopher? If it be a self-evident, intuitive, axiomatic, universally admitted truth, that one God ought only to be worshipped,—then why do the nations worship sun, moon and stars? why do they pay Divine homage to idols, and “change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things?” why do they deify heroes, and inanimate things, and diseases and vices? If it be a self-evident, intuitive, axiomatic, universally admitted truth, that there is a future state of existence in which virtue will be rewarded and vice punished,—then how is it that whole schools of philosophers disputed the truth of that doctrine, and the wisest, the best, and the most virtuous men of antiquity, questioned whether there was such a state? If it be a self-evident, intuitive, axiomatic, universally admitted truth, that repentance is a sufficient atonement of sin,—then how is it that the nations have not been agreed as to what sin is? how is it that the idea of repentance is not to

be found in the religious systems of most of them ? how is it that instead of becoming penitent for their sins, the nations have had recourse to bloody sacrifices for pacifying their conscience and for appeasing an angry Deity ?

If the doctrines of Bráhmaism, instead of being put on the basis of intuition, had been said to have been derived, as the older Bráhmas said they were, from a contemplation of the works of Nature and from the deductions of reason, there would have been some plausibility in the assertion, though the assertion would not have been even then quite true. Let me not be misunderstood ; I am not saying that nothing concerning God and our duty can be known from the light of Nature, of reason and of conscience. I believe with the Hebrew poet, that “ the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth ; and their words to the end of the world.” I believe with St. Paul, that “ the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.” And I also agree with

the same writer, when he says that, " when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves ; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." I do not therefore maintain that the works of Nature, and even our reason and conscience, give us no light concerning God and human duty ; they do most assuredly give us some light. But what I maintain is, that that light is not sufficient to guide us to the path of eternal happiness. But if the combined illumination of Nature, reason and conscience, be such a feeble glimmer, how faint must be the ray, if any, which mere unaided intuition can dart upon us ! The truth is, intuition as such, without any process of reasoning, gives us no light on the subject ; and any one that has the boldness to assert that the doctrines of Brâhmaism are intuitive truths, cannot possibly be acquainted with the nature and characteristics of those truths. After what one hears regarding the intuitional basis of Brâhmaism, one would not be astonished if some over-clever economist of a future date were to maintain that John Stuart Mill's Principles of Political Economy were intuitive truths.

The fact is that most of the truths which form the system of deism, as propagated by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, "the first and purest of English deists," and which also form the system of Bráhmaism, though they are dimly discernible by the light of human reason, have been fully disclosed and illustrated only by the Christian revelation. The deists learnt those truths, in all their comprehensiveness, originally from the Bible, and then, trying to deduce them from the light of Nature and reason, gave out that a Divine revelation was not necessary. No doubt, when a truth is revealed, it may be easy to show not only that it is agreeable to reason, but that it was discoverable by reason. But the two things are quite distinct from each other. It is one thing to discover a truth, and quite another thing to show that the truth thus discovered is in harmony with the laws of the human mind. On this point let me read to you the just observations of the philosophic Mr. Locke, the celebrated author of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, observations which I commend to the especial attention of Bráhma. "When truths are once known to us," says he, "though by tradition, we are apt to be favourable to our own parts, and ascribe to our own understandings the discovery of what, in reality, we borrowed

from others ; or, at least, finding we can prove what at first we learned from others, we are forward to conclude it an obvious truth, which, if we had sought, we could not have missed. Nothing seems hard to our understandings what is once known : and because what we see, we see with our own eyes, we are apt to overlook or forget the help we had from others, who showed it us, and first made us see it ; as if we were not at all behoden to them for those truths they opened the way to, and led us into (for knowledge being only of truths that are perceived to be so), we are favourable enough to our own faculties to conclude that they, of their own strength, would have attained those discoveries without any foreign assistance ; and that we know those truths by the strength and native light of our own minds, as they did from whom we received them by theirs, only they had the luck to be before us. Thus the whole stock of human knowledge is claimed by every one as his private possession, as soon as he (profiting by others' discoveries) has got it into his own mind : and so it is ; but not properly by his own single industry, nor of his own acquisition. He studies, it is true, and takes pains to make a progress in what others have delivered ; but their pains were of another sort, who first

brought those truths to light, which he afterwards derives from them. He that travels the roads now, applauds his own strength and legs that have carried him so far in such a scantling of time, and ascribes all to his own vigour, little considering how much he owes to their pains, who cleared the woods, drained the bogs, built the bridges, and made the ways passable : without which he might have toiled much with little progress" "A great many things," continues Mr. Locke, "a great many things which we have been bred up in the belief of, from our cradles, and are notions grown familiar, (and as it were, natural to us, under the Gospel,) we take for unquestionable obvious truths, and easily demonstrable ; without considering how long we might have been in doubt or ignorance of them, had revelation been silent. And many are beholden to revelation who do not acknowledge it. It is no diminishing to revelation, that reason gives its suffrage too, to the truths revelation has discovered. But it is our mistake to think, that because reason confirms them to us, we had the first knowledge of them from thence and in that clear evidence we now possess them."\*

\* *Reasonableness of Christianity* : (Cabinet Library edition) pp. 191—193.

Thus we see, gentlemen, that the doctrines of Bráhmaism are not, as they are alleged to be, intuitive truths ; neither are they the deductions of the unassisted reason of man : and as Bráhma's ignore all Divine revelation, we are forced to conclude that, so far as they are concerned, the doctrines of their faith are baseless, having no stable ground on which to rest.

2. In the second place, Bráhmaism is uncertain. This is a natural consequence of its baselessness. A building, which has an unstable foundation, can never be secure—its stability cannot be relied on. When the rain descends, and the floods come, and the tempests blow, and beat upon that building, it must inevitably tumble down. Such, I have no doubt, will be the case with Bráhmaism. It is a great advantage for a religion to be founded on a written revelation. There can be, in such a case, no uncertainty about its leading doctrines. There may be different ways of interpreting the written word, but those different interpretations could only affect the non-essential points of the system. Neither could there be, in such a case, the possibility of organic changes in the system : such a religion is like a house built upon a rock ; it is secure ; it is changeless ; it is everlasting. Bráhmaism

is not such, as its history shows. There has been a shifting of its foundations ever since its commencement, as I showed at some length in this very hall three years ago. At first it was said to be founded on the *Vedas*, which were believed to be eternal. But the eternal gave way, and Bráhmaism was subsequently placed on Nature and the light of reason. But at this moment it is said to rest on intuition, and we have already seen, it rests on no such thing. How long this transcendental and aerial foundation will remain, it is impossible to say; some Bráhma may be convinced by the arguments of the author of "An Examination into the Philosophy of Sir William Hamilton," and may have influence enough to persuade the *Samáj* to found its theology on a materialistic basis. And with the shifting of the foundation there must necessarily be a modification of the superstructure. Thus all is uncertainty. And no reasonable man will ever build his hopes of everlasting welfare on a system of religion, the foundations of which are uncertain.

3. In the third place, Bráhmaism is unauthoritative. The religions of the world, whether true or false, profess themselves to be founded on Divine authority; and even legislators, like

Manu, Zerdusht, Solon and Numa Pompilius, who wished their laws to be obeyed by the populace, professed to have obtained their institutes from heaven. The reason of this allegation was, that a system of religion, or of politico-religious institutes, that was founded on mere human opinion, could not bind the conscience of man. This truth was remarkably exemplified in the case of the philosophers of antiquity. "The truths, which they proved by speculative reason, wanted some still more sensible authority to support them, and render them of more force and efficacy in practice ; and the precepts, which they delivered, however reasonable and fit to be obeyed, were destitute of weight, and were only the precepts of men. Hence the philosophers never did nor could effect any change in the lives of their contemporaries. Indeed, some of the wisest and most sensible of them complained, that they found the understandings of men so dark and beclouded, their wills so biassed and inclined to evil, their passions so outrageous and rebellious against reason, that they considered the rules and laws of right reason as very difficult to be practised, and they entertained very little hope of ever being able to persuade the world to submit to them ; so that the great duties of religion were laid down by them as

matters of speculation and dispute, rather than as rules of action ; and they were not so much urged upon the hearts and consciences of men, as proposed to their admiration." However just may be the complaints of the philosophers, there can be no doubt that the chief reason of their failure was, that they had not sufficient authority to enforce their precepts in practice. In connection with this point, let me quote to you again a passage from the writings of that great philosopher from whom I have already quoted to you, the ingenious Locke : —

" Though yet," says he, " if any one should think that, out of the sayings of the wise heathens, before our Saviour's time, there might be a collection made of all those rules of morality, which are to be found in the Christian religion, yet this would not at all hinder, but that the world nevertheless stood as much in need of our Saviour, and the morality delivered by Him. Let it be granted (though not true) that all the moral precepts of the Gospel were known by somebody or other, amongst mankind, before. But where, or how, or of what use, is not considered. Suppose they may be picked up here and there ; some from Solon and Bias in Greece ; others from Tully in Italy ; and, to complete the work, let Confucius, as far as China, be con-

\* sulted ; and Anacharsis the Seythian contribute his share. What will all this do to give the world a complete morality, that may be to mankind the unquestionable rule of life and manners ? I will not here urge the impossibility of collecting from men so far distant from one another, in time, and place, and languages. I will suppose there was a Stobœus in those times, who had gathered the moral sayings from all the sages of the world. What would this amount to, towards being a steady rule, a certain transcript of a law that we are under ? Did the saying of Aristippus or Confucius give it an authority ? Was Zeno a lawgiver to mankind ? If not, what he or any other philosopher delivered, was but a saying of his. Mankind might hearken to it, or reject it, as they pleased, or as it suited their interest, passions, principles, or humours : they were under no obligation ; the opinion of this or that philosopher was of no authority.”\*

The system of Brâhmaism labours under the capital defect of which the great metaphysician, Locke, speaks. It has no authority to enforce its teachings. It cannot say, as Christianity says, “Thus saith the Lord.” I repeat what I said on a former occasion at another place, that,

\* *Reasons of Christianity* ; (Cabinet Library edition) pp. 186-187.

Bráhmaism, so far as its authoritativeness is concerned, may be defined as the conjugation of the verb “to think” in the present indicative, “I think, thou thinkest, he thinks; we think, ye or you think, they think.” Such is Bráhmaism. It is absolutely destitute of authority. It is founded on thinkings of individuals, on vague surmises, on mere opinions. Parodying the language of Locke, I may truly say,— “What would this amount to, towards making Bráhmaism a steady rule, a certain transcript of a law that we are under? Did the saying of Rájá Rám Mohan Roy, or of Pandita Rám Chandra Bidyábágis'a, give it an authority? Is Bábu Debendra Náth Tagore a lawgiver to mankind? If not, what he or any other Achárjya delivered, was but a saying of his. Mankind might hearken to it, or reject it, as they pleased, or as it suited their interest, passions, principles, or humours: they were under no obligation; the opinion of this or that Achárjya was of no authority.”

In this respect, that is, in respect of authoritative sanction, I cannot help remarking that the primitive Bráhmaś were in a far better position than the modern Brahmas. The primitive Bráhmaś believed in the inspiration of the Vedas, to which they always appealed.

They could truly say what Professor Banerjea in his admirable *Dialogues* makes one of the interlocutors say—"The Veda is the highest authority in the decision of controversy. It is our Sudder Court of appeal in religious disputes." It is true, the modern Bráhmas may allege that they have also a court of appeal—the High Court of Intuition. But I have already shown you that Bráhmaism lies beyond the jurisdiction of that High Court, as well on its Original as its Appellate side.

I can imagine a Bráhma preacher—one of those "devoted missionaries," of whom the Bráhma organ speaks, as going north, south, east, west, to preach the "saving truths" of Bráhmaism—I can imagine a Bráhma preacher arguing with an educated Bengali and endeavouring to bring him over to the Bráhma faith. I can imagine the Bráhma Upáchárjya proclaiming the doctrine of future life, and setting forth with much unction the miseries of the wicked man and the happiness of the good man in the future world. To his fervent pleading, I can imagine the educated Bengali coldly to answer, "But what proof is there that there is a future life? Who can assure me that there is a future state of being in which virtue will be rewarded and vice punished? Reason tells me that it is

at best a vague probability. And the wisest \* philosopher of antiquity, Socrates, shortly before his death, told his friends—" I *hope* I am going to good men, though this I would not take upon me peremptorily to assert." And the same philosopher concluded his valedictory speech with these remarkable words—" I am going out of the world, and you are to continue in it ; but which of us has the better part is a secret to every one but God."\*• And Cicero, one of the acutest intellects of ancient times, after giving a summary of the diverse opinions of philosophers on the doctrine of future life, some admitting and others denying its existence, says, " Which of these is true, God alone knows, and which is most probable, a very great question."† " So that you see, Mr. Upáchárjya," continues the educated Bengali, " that it is by no means certain that there is a future life. How have you come to the certain conclusion that there is a future state of being for men ? What is your authority for believing in that dogma ?" I can imagine the Bráhma preacher to reply in some such way as the following ;—" My authority for believing in the doctrine of future life, is not any book, any paper revelation. My authority

\* Plato's Dialogues, *Phædon*.

† Cicero, *Tusc. Questio*.

is the higher and interior revelation of intuition. The doctrine of future life is written in the depths of the soul in imperishable characters." The educated Bengali may well rejoин, " For myself I can tell you that I have discovered no such thing. I have sounded, so far as I could, the depths of my soul, and have not found the trace of a syllable on the subject. And not only I, but Socrates and Cicero and the rest of the philosophers of Greece and Italy and India, were in the same predicament with me. They all must have been stone blind."

Let me give you only another illustration. I can imagine the Bráhma preacher eloquently descanting before the educated Bengali on the utility, necessity and duty of prayer. I can imagine the educated Bengali to cut short the Upáchárjya's fine declamation by the inconvenient enquiry—" But how do you know that it is either our duty to pray, or that God will hearken to our prayer? If you had an express revelation from God on the subject, that would be different. But ignoring revelation how have you come to the conclusion that prayer is useful, and that God will answer it? My reason tells me, that what will happen will happen, and no prayer of mine will induce God to swerve from His settled purpose; it is therefore absurd to

pray. And my conscience tells me, that it is not likely that God will ever hearken to the prayer of such a sinful being as I am, who have repeatedly broken His law and set His authority at defiance. Besides, if prayer be useful, and if it be my duty to pray, I don't know how to pray. Have you not read, Mr. Upáchárjya the Dialogue of Plato on Prayer? Alcibiades is going to the temple to pray, Socrates meets him and endeavours to dissuade him from it on the ground that he does not know how to pray. Socrates concludes his argument saying—“ You see that it is not at all safe for you to go and pray in the temple, I am therefore of opinion that it is much better for you to be silent.—And it is necessary you should wait for some person to teach you how you ought to behave yourself, both towards the gods and men.” To which Alcibiades says, “ And when will that time come, Socrates? and who is he that will instruct me? With what pleasure should I look to him?” To which Socrates replies, “ He will do it who takes a true care of you. But, methinks, as we read in Homer, that Minerva dissipated the mist that covered Diomed and hindered him from distinguishing God from man ; so it is necessary that he should, in the first place, scatter the darkness that covers your soul, and afterwards give you

those remedies that are necessary to put you in a condition of discerning good and evil ; for at present you know not how to make the distinction." Alcibiades says, " I think, I must defer my sacrifice to that time." Socrates approves, —" You have reason ;" says he, " it is more safe so to do, than run so great a risk." " How is it," continues the educated Bengali, " that when so great a teacher as Socrates, ' whom the oracle, well inspired, pronounced the wisest of men,' speaks on the subject of prayer with such diffidence, professing his ignorance as to how he should pray, and dwelling on the necessity of illumination from above, how is it that on that same subject, you Bráhmas speak so confidently, so dogmatically ? Have you really received that illumination from heaven of which Socrates stood in need ?" I can imagine the Bráhma preacher to reply—" Our religion lies in our intuitive consciousness, its doctrines we directly perceive ; we require no argumentation ; they approach us as self-evident realities. All religious truths, all the vital truths of religion, are originally intuitive. The doctrine that we ought to pray to God, and that God will hear our prayer, is written, like the other doctrines of Bráhmaism, in the depths of the soul in imperishable characters. And as to how to pray, we know that intuitively."

Well may the educated Bengali say, “ Well, you Bráhmaṇas seem to be extraordinary beings, you seem to have intuitive and perfect knowledge of subjects of which Socrates and the rest of the world knew very little. You seem to have whole tomes of divinity and systems of theology written down in the depths of your souls. Truly, the soul of a Bráhma must be a second edition of the human soul, revised, corrected, and improved with copious notes.” It will be thus seen that Bráhmaṇism is destitute of all authority to enforce its doctrines and its precepts. Mankind may believe in them or not, just as they please—they are under no obligation.

*Fourthly.* Bráhmaṇism does not discover the means of the forgiveness of sin. This is by far the gravest defect of the system of religion which we are now considering. Religion is of value so far as it reconciles man to God, and makes him capable of attaining to everlasting happiness ; and any system of religion, though containing sublime views of the Divine attributes and beautiful precepts of morality, if it fails in accomplishing this object, is practically of little use. Bráhmaṇism does not accomplish this object, and is therefore eminently defective as a system of religion.

It will be admitted by every observer of human nature and every reader of history, that man is in a state of alienation with his Maker. The cause of this alienation is sin. That sin is a great evil, the greatest evil in the universe, will be admitted by every one, though the Bráhma view of sin is defective to a certain extent. Sin is a transgression of the highest law, the law of the supreme and righteous Governor of the universe. Sin contradicts the great object of man's creation, which is that he may serve his Maker, and thus secure his own everlasting happiness. Sin misrepresents God, making Him as one who wants either will or power to crush the offender. Sin accuses God of want of wisdom and goodness in making laws which were not for the good of the creature, and which the creature could not obey without detriment to his own interests. It is rebellion—it is treason against the highest authority, attempting to dethrone God and to set the creature in His room. It is on account of this sin, this black ingratitude, this "foul revolt," that man has become an object of the Divine displeasure. That every sinner is the object of the Divine displeasure, I showed on a former occasion from the voice of conscience, the voice of reason, and the consentient voice of man in every age of the world ; and I

don't think it necessary to repeat these arguments here. And it is the office of religion to devise means for removing that displeasure, and for making reconciliation with God. This is one of the two great problems of religion, the problem, viz. How can guilty man be reconciled to his offended Maker? This problem is not solved in the system of Bráhmaism; indeed, Bráhmaism ignores the problem altogether. The great problem is, Given this displeasure of the Almighty against man for his sin, it is required to remove that displeasure. Bráhmaism does not accept the problem at all. It says that sin, though an evil, though it produces disorder in man's moral constitution, does not change God's relation to man. God cannot be displeased with man, though guilty of sin. Thus the problem is ignored, and consequently no solution is attempted. There is thus, according to Bráhmaism, no atonement for sin; because, according to Bráhmaism, no atonement is necessary. I am aware that one of the doctrines of Bráhmaism is, that repentance is sufficient atonement for sin. But that is an idle saying, so far as God's relation to us is concerned. By the doctrine of the atonement is meant a plan by which God is reconciled to man. But according to Bráhmaism, God does

not require to be reconciled to man, since God is not angry, and cannot be angry, with a sinner. Now, gentlemen, I ask, of what use is such a system of religion, if religion it can be called, to me or to any other human being ? I am conscious of having committed sin, of having been guilty of ingratitude against my greatest Benefactor, of having committed treason against the highest authority, the King of kings and the Lord of lords ; my conscience tells me that the good and merciful and yet just God, against whom I have sinned, is angry with me. I have a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. I perceive that the sword of Divine justice is hanging over my head, suspended by a single thread, as it were, and ready to fall upon me ; my mind is overcast with deep gloom and black despair ; and I cry out in great agony—" How shall I escape this imminent danger ?"—" What shall I do to be saved ? Who shall deliver me from going down into the pit ? What shall I do to be restored to the lost favour of GOD ? How shall I avert the Divine displeasure ?" Such is my condition, and the condition of every man that has been truly awakened to a sense of his sin. Does Brâhmaism afford me any relief in this state of despondency ? Far from it. Instead

of giving me relief, it only mocks me. It says to me that I am unnecessarily uneasy, that my apprehensions are groundless, and that God is not angry with me. A religion which can thus trifle with this deep conviction of sin, with this terrible consciousness of humanity, cannot be suitable to man. It cannot be religion in the proper sense of the word—it is the carcass of religion. But more than this; Bráhmaism proclaims aloud that every man must be punished for his sins, both in this world and in that which is to come. Where, then, according to Bráhmaism, is the hope of the sinner? Clearly, there is none; for he must suffer the punishment due to his sins; every man must expiate his own sins; every man must suffer the full and exact punishment due to his sins.

*Fifthly.* Bráhmaism devises no plan for the eradication of our sinful inclinations, and the purification of our souls.

I have said that there are two great problems in religion. One of them I have already mentioned, *viz.* "Given the displeasure of God against a sinner, how to remove that displeasure." And the other great problem in religion is, "Given the unholy nature of man, how to make it holy." The solution of these two problems is the great business of religion.

Any religion that does not grapple with these problems cannot be called religion ; it may be a system of philosophy, or ethics, or of speculative opinions, but it is not religion. At any rate, it is not religion suited to man in his present position as a rebel against God's authority and as a corrupt being. A religion which successfully solves these two great problems is true religion—it is a religion suited to man in his present state and condition, since, by removing the Divine displeasure against him and making him an object of the Divine favour, and at the same time by purifying his unholy nature, it makes him capable of everlasting happiness. Now, Bráhmaism, as we have already seen, ignores the first problem, but it does not ignore the second problem. It acknowledges that sin has corrupted man, that it has disorganized his moral and spiritual constitution ; and it also acknowledges that without a thorough purification and renovation of his nature, man cannot attain to everlasting happiness. How then does Bráhmaism solve this second great problem of religion ? What specific does it prescribe for the purification of the soul ? It prescribes repentance. Let us consider for a moment, whether this remedy proposed by Bráhmaism is adequate to the

purification and renovation of our nature. Now, our nature is thoroughly corrupt. Naturally, man loves sin and hates purity. His inclinations, desires, affections, are corrupt and impure. Such being the case, mere outward reformation of the conduct and of speech, a giving up of this or that bad habit, a lopping off of this or that corrupt inclination, a suppression of this or that evil affection, will not do ;—a thorough change in our nature is necessary. Can repentance produce this change ? What is repentance ? It is sincere sorrow for sin, coupled with a determination not to commit it again. But how can sorrow effect a renovation of my nature ? I may be ever sorry for my sin, and yet my nature may remain as unholy as before. I might weep and weep for a thousand years, and yet no alteration might be effected in my soul, so far as that weeping was concerned. Weeping could not make me holy. What is there in weeping or sorrow, as such, which could sanctify my nature ? There is evidently nothing. Neither could a determination not to commit sin and to become holy, which is the other part of repentance, change my character. No doubt, it is a good thing to make such a determination ; but how I shall keep that determination, is not considered. I may determine not

to commit sin, and yet, owing to the depravity of my nature, I doubtless shall be sinning still. My wishing to be anything does not make me that thing. I may wish to be a king, but my wishing will not make me one.

But it may be said that, if we were sincerely sorry for our sins, and determined to avoid them in future, God would take pity upon us and send us such help as would enable us to become holy. No doubt if such Divine help were sent to us, we should become holy. But what guarantee has the Bráhma for believing that such help would be sent? How does he know that the infinitely just and holy God, the righteous Ruler of the universe, would send such help to a rebel against His authority? And what is the nature of the help that he expects? These things are plainly revealed to us in the Christian Scriptures, but the Bráhma, who disbelieves in them, gropes in darkness. Thus the remedy, proposed by Bráhmaism for the purification of human nature, is inefficacious.

*Sixthly and lastly*, Bráhmaism does not furnish sufficient motives for the pursuit of a holy life.

The grand motive, the most powerful inducement which religion presents to men for the pursuit of a holy life is the hope of never end-

ing happiness after death. All the religions of the world, accordingly, place this inducement before their votaries. The polytheistic Hindu believes that by following the dictates of the Sastras he will, immediately after death, be taken into the heaven of Indra where he will enjoy pleasures without stint and measure ; the Vedantist believes that his career will end in his absorption into the Divine essence of Bráhma ; the Mahomedan has his devotion enflamed by the prospect of the sensual heaven which the Koran paints ; and the Christian runs to the goal of perfection, animated by the immortal prize set before him,—an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and that faileth not away,—a kingdom which shall never be shaken,—the glory which shall be revealed,—the pleasures which are at God's right hand, and the beatific vision in the heavenly Jerusalem. But Bráhmaism presents no such glowing prospect before its votaries. When the human soul is separated from its clayey tenement, it will not, according to Bráhmaism, fly to the mountains of eternal delight and be at rest. No. After death, begins with every man, whether good or bad, the great work of suffering for sin, for all the sins committed in the body. And who knows how long that will be ? The period may extend to inde-

finite ages, at any rate till the soul has fully expiated all its sins, till the full tale of punishment has been suffered, and the cup of misery drunk to the lees. What a dismal prospect this, gentlemen ! Is such a prospect calculated to quicken our pace in the path of obedience ? Is it fitted to animate us in our pathway after holiness ? No. On the contrary, will not such a terrible prospect of indefinite misery damp our zeal to serve God and to become holy ? And can such a prospect cheer us at the hour of death, that solemn hour, in which we bid farewell to father, mother, brother and sister ; when the soul passes through deep waters and is ushered into the presence of its Maker ? No. Bráhmaism cannot animate us to the pursuit of holiness, neither can it give us consolation in death.

I have thus shown that Bráhmaism is baseless, that it is uncertain, that it is unauthoritative, that it discovers no means for obtaining the pardon of sin, that it proposes no proper plan for the purification and renovation of our unholy nature, and that it furnishes not sufficient motives for the pursuit of holiness. Hence it follows as a consequence that Bráhmaism is not able to lead man to everlasting happiness. But there is a religion which is able to lead man to

everlasting happiness, on the claims of which religion I shall just say one word before concluding this lecture.

Christianity is not a baseless religion ; it is founded on the Word of God, which was committed to writing by inspired men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and gave unquestionable proofs of their Divine commission. Christianity is not uncertain; like its Divine Founder, it is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever ; it is independent of all changes of human opinions, of all revolutions in philosophy and science, of all conflicts between sectaries ; its institutes are all written down in a book, the most wonderful book in the world, which is intelligible to all, though some of the things contained in it have baffled the intellects of the deepest thinkers of the human race. Christianity is not unauthoritative ; it is not founded on human opinions, on vague surmises, on the thinkings of individual men, on the deductions of human reason ; it is founded on Divine authority, for it has God for its Author ; and whether speaking in a voice of thunder or in accents of love, it always begins with “ Thus saith the LORD.” Christianity took up the two great problems of religion—“ How can God be just and yet justify the ungodly ?” and “ How

can the impure become pure?" grappled successfully with those problems, and gave them Divine solutions. For the solution of the first problem, the second glorious Person of the adorable Trinity, the Lord JESUS CHRIST, descended to this world, became incarnate, and suffered death on the Cross—thus making expiation for the sins of the human race, satisfying the Divine justice, opening a pathway for the overflow of Divine mercy, reconciling man to God, restoring them to His lost favour, adopting them into the heavenly family, and investing them with the rights and privileges of the sons and daughters of the Lord God ALMIGHTY. For the solution of the second problem, the third glorious Person of the Holy Trinity, the Blessed SPIRIT abides with the Church, convincing men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come; producing in them genuine repentance; enlightening their dark understandings; changing their hearts; sanctifying their dispositions and affections; renewing their wills; quickening their consciences; new-modelling their natures; thus making them fit to enter into the abodes of glory.

Christianity also furnishes the strongest motives, the most powerful inducements, to pursue after holiness with all diligence, since it places before its votaries the invaluable prize of

endless life and eternal glory, while it animates them by the examples of men, of whom the world was not worthy, and above all by the example of their Divine Master ;—so that every Christian may take up the language of the apostle and say—“ Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto JESUS, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Thus Christianity is eminently suited to the condition of man, and gives glory to God ; it proclaims “ Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill to the children of men.” Amen.











